



18 CHAPTER

BHAKTI AND SUFI MOVEMENTS

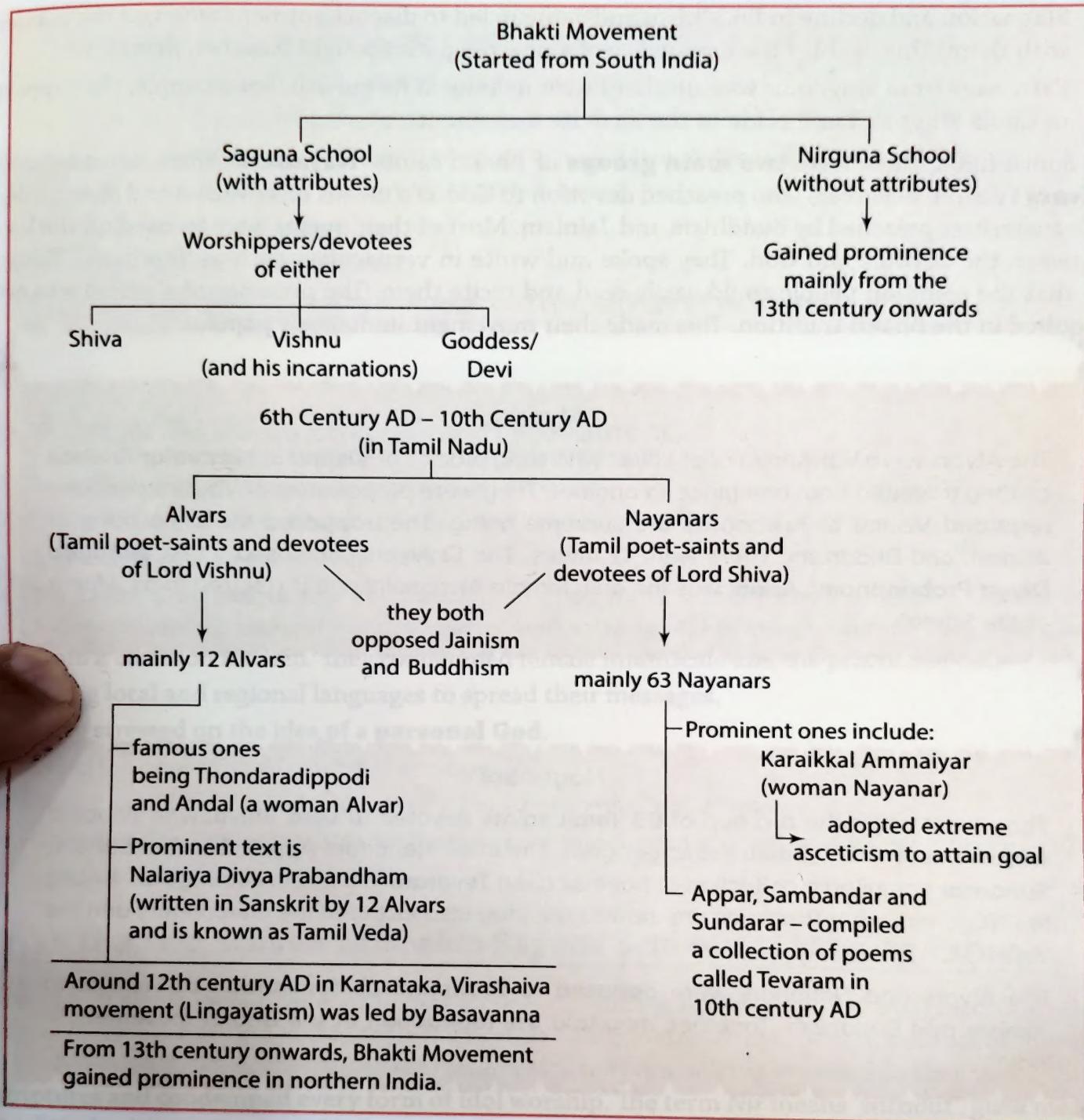


Origin of Bhakti Movement

The Bhakti movement **originated in the Southern parts of India**, especially Tamil Nadu, between the **6th and 10th century AD**; it slowly spread northwards from the end of the 15th century.

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Causes for the Emergence of Bhakti Movement

- The Bhakti movement was partly a response to the Brahmanical orthodoxy and rigidity in the caste system.
- It provided an inclusive platform to the marginalised sections of society due to its emphasis on equality of mankind. It appealed to large underprivileged sections of society where it gained popularity and emerged as a religious thought.

- Stagnation and decline in Buddhism and Jainism led to disenchantment amongst the masses with them. This enabled the emergence of a new religious thought based on devotion.
- Patronage from kingdoms was another factor helping in its growth. For example, the support of Chola kings in Tamil Nadu to the Shaivite movement.

In South India, there were **two main groups** of Bhakti saints: **Nayanars** (Shiva devotees) and **Alvars** (Vishnu devotees) who preached devotion to God as a means of salvation and disregarded the austerities preached by Buddhism and Jainism. Most of their poems were focused on the love between the devotee and God. They spoke and wrote in vernaculars such as Tamil and Telugu so that the common people could easily read and recite them. The presence of a priest was not required in the Bhakti tradition. This made their movement immensely popular.

Alvars

The Alvars were Vaishnava poet-saints who sang praises of **Vishnu or his avatar Krishna** as they travelled from one place to another. They were propagators of Vaishnavism and regarded Vishnu or Krishna as the supreme being. They **opposed** the philosophy of Jainism and Buddhism. There were 12 Alvars. The 12 Alvars composed a text '**Nalayira Divya Prabandham**'. **Andal** was the only female Alvar saint and is referred to as '**Meera of the South**'.

Nayanars

They were originally a group of **63 Tamil saints** devoted to **Lord Shiva**, who adopted extreme ascetism to attain the larger goal. The three Nayanars **Appar, Sambandar** and **Sundarar** compiled a collection of poems called **Tevaram** in the 10th century AD. Among the Nayanars were Brahmins and nobles but they also included the oil-mongers and the Vellalars.

The Alvars and Nayanars were **opposed to Brahmanical domination** as well as to Jainism and Buddhism. Together, they **laid the foundation of the Bhakti movement** in India.

Virashaiva Movement/Lingayats (12th Century AD)

The Virashaivas are a Shaivite sect in Hinduism that emerged in the **12th century AD** in **Karnataka** during the reign of **Kalachuri Dynasty**. They opposed the elaborate rituals prescribed by Hindu priests. The sect was founded by **Basavanna**. The followers were called **Virashaiva** (heroes of Shiva) or the **Lingayats** (wearers of Shivalinga).

The Virashaiva movement included the following practices and beliefs:

- Worshipping Shiva in his manifestations as linga.
- Wearing of the linga **on the left shoulder**, thus the practitioners are known as Lingayats.
- **Burying their dead** instead of cremating them (as they believe that the devotee will be united with Shiva and will not return to this world).
- Questioning the theory of re-birth.
- Challenging the **caste system**.
- Encouraging **post-puberty marriage and re-marriage of widows**.

Major Features of the Bhakti Movement

- Intense love and devotion as a means of salvation.
- Unity of God (Universalism) and repeating the One True Name repeatedly.
- **Rejection of rituals** and ceremonies.
- **No caste discrimination** and keeping an open mind on religious and gender issues. The followers allowed both men and women to seek salvation. They even took their meals together from a common kitchen. They condemned female infanticide and the practice of Sati. Using local and regional languages to spread their messages.
- They stressed on the idea of a **personal God**.
- Need for a true Guru (teacher) to realise God.
- They propagated equality and spirit of brotherhood like the Sufis.
- They **despised priests** who were thought of as middlemen and instead focused on establishing a personal connection with God.

The Two Schools of Bhakti: Saguna School and Nirguna School

The Bhakti saints were divided into two schools depending on the way they imagined God. One school of thought imagined God as formless with no attributes or qualities. This school of thought is the **Nirguna School**. The followers are more focused on acquiring knowledge. They rejected the scriptures and condemned every form of idol worship. The term *Nir* means 'without', *guna* means 'qualities' or 'properties,' and *bhakti* means 'devotion' or 'faithfulness'. They put a greater emphasis on learning. Brahmin supremacy was rejected by the Nirguna saints. Personal encounters with God was valued. Their beliefs were the amalgamation of three traditions: Vaishnava Bhakti, the Nanpanthi movement and Sufism. Nirguna bhakti is an unmanifested expression of absolute devotion to God and the greatest level of consciousness. The prominent figures of this school of thought were **Kabir, Guru Nanak and Dadu Dayal**.

On the other hand, the Saguna School thought of God as having a definite form, quality and positive attributes and believed that God manifests himself in incarnations such as Rama and Krishna. His spirit is to be found in the **idols and images** worshipped at home and in temples. The **Saguna School** emphasises love and devotion. This School was divided into two groups. The first group valued Ram Bhakti and the second group believed in Krishna Bhakti. The followers accept the spiritual **authority** of the Vedas and the need of a human Guru as a mediator between God and the devotee. The Saguna poets promoted idol worship and advocated a religion of submission and simple faith in a personal God. **Ramanuja**, **Ramananda** and **Chaitanya Mahaprabhu** belonged to this school of thought.

Prominent Bhakti Saints

Name	Year and Place	Details
Adi Shankaracharya	8th century AD Probably Kerala	<p>Chief proponent of the Advaita (non-dualism) school of Vedanta philosophy. The school believes in identity of the Atman (individual soul) and Brahman (ultimate reality).</p> <p>He was inspired by early Hindu philosopher Gaudapada and called him Paramaguru. He is regarded as the founder of the Dashanami Sampradaya. He established four Mathas or Amnaya Peethams (monasteries), with headquarters at Dwaraka (Gujarat) in the west, Jagannath Puri (Odisha) in the east, Sringeri (Karnataka) in the south and Badrikashrama (Uttarakhand) in the north. He wrote Upadesasahasri (<i>a thousand teachings</i>). Shankaracharya's other popular works are, Vivekachudamani and Bhaja Govindum Stotra.</p> <p>A commentary on the Bhagavad Gita, the Brahma Sutra and the Upanishads was written by him. The followers of Shankaracharya are called 'Smrtas'. His most famous lines are 'Brahma Satyam Jagat Mithya Jivo Brahmatra Naparaha', which means '<i>The Absolute Spirit is the reality, the world of appearance is Maya</i>', and 'Ekameva Adviteeyam Brahma', which means '<i>The absolute is one alone, not two</i>'.</p>
Ramanuja (Tamil Brahmin) Also referred to as <i>Ilaya Perumal</i> , which means the radiant one.	1017–1137 AD Tamil Nadu	<p>He was a major exponent of Sri Vaishnavism tradition and the chief proponent of the Vishishtadvaita sub-school of Vedanta philosophy. He advocated prabartimarga or self-surrender to God. Vishishtadvaita signifies non-dualism of a qualified whole but is characterised by multiplicity. In other words, it believes in '<i>all diversity subsuming to an underlying unity</i>' (qualified monoism).</p> <p>Ramanuja's most important works are his commentary on the Vedanta Sutras (<i>the Sri Bhasya, or 'True Commentary'</i>) and on the Bhagavad Gita (<i>the Gitabhasya, or 'Commentary on the Gita'</i>).</p> <p>His other popular writings are the Vedartha Samgraha (<i>'Summary of the Meaning of the Veda'</i>), the Vedantasara (<i>'Essence of Vedanta'</i>) and Vedantadipa (<i>'Lamp of Vedanta'</i>).</p> <p><i>Srirangam Ranganatha temple</i> in Tamil Nadu is associated with his tradition.</p>
Madhvacharya (Kannada Saint)	1238–1317 AD Karnataka	<p>He was the chief proponent of Dvaita (dualism) School of Vedanta philosophy. He named his philosophy as 'Tatvavada'. His popular works are the <i>Gita Bhashya</i>, <i>Brahma Sutra Bhashya</i>, <i>Anu Bhashya</i>, <i>Karma Nirnaya</i> and <i>Vishnu Tattva Nirnaya</i>. As per him, there lies a fundamental difference between Atman (individual soul) and the Brahman (ultimate reality or God Vishnu). During initiation, he was given the name <i>Purnaprajna</i>. He was a critic of Adi Shankara's Advaita Vedanta and Ramanuja's Vishishtadvaita Vedanta.</p>

Name	Year and Place	Details
Nimbarka	12th century AD Maharashtra (but later migrated to Mathura)	He was a Vaishnava saint and a chief proponent of Dvait-advait philosophy , i.e., duality and nonduality at the same time (dualistic non-dualism). He founded a community called the Nimbarka Sampradaya . He wrote a commentary on the Brahma Sutras called Vedanta-Parjata-Saurabha . The basic practice of this community consists of the worship of Sri Radha Madhav , with Sri Radha being personified as the inseparable part of Sri Krishna.
Namdev	1270–1350 AD Maharashtra	He is also significant to the Varkari sect of Hinduism and he worshipped Lord Vithoba . His writings are included in Guru Granth Sahib , the holy text of Sikhism. He is one of the five revered gurus in Dadupanth lineage of Hinduism.
Dnyaneshwar	13th century AD Maharashtra	He was the worshipper of Vithoba , a manifestation of Lord Vishnu and is related to the Varkari sect . He authored <i>Dnyaneshwari</i> (a commentary on the Bhagavad Gita) and <i>Amrutanubhav</i> . These two works are considered to be the earliest surviving works in Marathi literature. He was the contemporary of another great Marathi philosopher Namdev .
Ramananda	1300–1380 AD Uttar Pradesh	He was a Vaishnava saint and considered to be the founder of the Ramanandi sampradaya which is the largest ascetic community in India. He was a devotee of Lord Rama . He attempted to achieve a synthesis between Advaita Vedanta and Vaishnava bhakti. Kabir and Ravidas were among his disciples. He was the first to use Hindi for the propagation of his teachings. His popular works are <i>Gyan-lila</i> and <i>Yog-cintamani</i> (Hindi), <i>Vaishnava Mata Bhajabhasika</i> and <i>Ramarcana paddhati</i> (Sanskrit). He is also known as "the bridge between the Bhakti movement of the South and the Bhakti movement of the North."
Kabir (weaver)	15th century AD Uttar Pradesh	<p>He believed in Vaishnavism and had a strong bent for monist Advaita philosophy which signifies presence of God inside every person and everything. He was a disciple of Ramananda. He belonged to the Nirguna school and criticised the orthodox ideas and the discriminatory caste system. He described Hindus and Muslims as 'pots of the same clay'. He believed in yogic techniques and said that devotion to God was a powerful method of salvation. He is also best known for his two-line couplets, known as 'Kabir Ke Dohe'. His thoughts can be identified into three literary forms – dohas (short two liners), ramanas (rhymed 4 liners), and sabdas (words).</p> <p>His followers are known as Kabir Panthis. His ideas have been compiled in a text called Bijak. Kabir's verses were also incorporated in the Adi Granth, an important text of Sikhism.</p>
Narsinh Mehta	1414–1481 AD Gujarat	He was a poet-saint and belonged to the Vaishnava sect. He made great contributions to Gujarati literature and his famous bhajan Vaishnava Jana To was one of Mahatma Gandhi's favourites. Narsinh Mehta is also referred to as Adikavi .
Sankardev	1449–1568 AD Assam	<p>He was a Vaishnava saint-scholar, poet, play-wright and a socio-religious reformer from Assam. He propagated the philosophy of 'Ekasarana Dharma' (or one God) in the form of Lord Krishna. 'Sattras' are institutional centres or monasteries associated with Ekasarana Dharma.</p> <p>His famous works include Kirtan Ghosha, written in Brajavali (mixture of Maithili and Assamese). Madhavdev was his successor.</p>

Name	Year and Place	Details
Guru Nanak	1469–1539 AD Punjab	<p>He is said to have been <i>inspired by Kabir</i> and belonged to Nirguna school. He was the first among the 10 Sikh gurus and is said to be the founder of Sikhism.</p>
		<p>Teachings of Guru Nanak</p>
		<p>Guru Nanak Dev is the founder of Sikhism. His main teachings form the three pillars of Sikhism:</p>
		<p>Naam Japna</p>
		<p>Simran and Naam Japna are the practices introduced by Guru Nanak. Simran refers to the remembrance of God by repetition of his name.</p>
		<p>Kirat Karni</p>
		<p>Sikhs are instructed to do Kirat Karni, which means to honestly earn money via physical and mental labour while accepting both pleasures and sorrows as God's gifts and blessings.</p>
		<p>Vand Chakna</p>
		<p>The Sikhs were instructed to share their wealth within the community by practising Vand Chakna – 'Share and consume together'.</p>
Surdas	1478–1580 AD North India	<p>He was blind from birth and was an ardent devotee of Lord Krishna. He belonged to the Saguna school and was a disciple of Vallabhacharya. Krishna's childhood is portrayed in his famous works 'Sursagar' and 'Sur Saravali'.</p>
Vallabhacharya (Telugu Saint)	1479–1531 AD North India	<p>He was the founder of the Krishna-centred Pushti Marg sect of Vaishnavism in North India (mainly Braj region). He propounded the philosophy of Shuddhadvaita (Pure non-dualism). According to him, moksha (salvation) could be attained through <i>Sneha</i> (deep-rooted love for God). Nathdwara in Rajasthan is a significant pilgrim place of Pushti Marg Sampradaya and is famous for its Shrinathji Temple.</p>
Chaitanya Mahaprabhu	1486–1534 AD West Bengal	<p>He was a Bengali Hindu saint and the chief proponent of the Achintya Bheda Abheda and Gaudiya Vaishnavism traditions. Being a prominent Saguna saint, he also expounded the Vaishnava school of Bhakti yoga and was an ardent devotee of Lord Krishna. He created the philosophy of Achintaya Bheda-Abheda. Achintya means 'inconceivable,' bheda means 'different,' and abheda means 'non-difference' in Sanskrit. He popularised <i>Kirtans</i> (religious songs) as a form of worship of Krishna. ISKCON has taken its inspirations from his teachings. He wrote 'Siksastakam', a Gaudiya Vaishnava prayer in eight verses.</p>
		<p>The teachings of Chaitanya Mahaprabhu are centred on the adoration of Lord Krishna. They are as follows:</p>
		<p>1. Krishna is the absolute truth.</p>
		<p>2. All energies are possessed by Krishna.</p>
		<p>3. Lord Krishna is the source of every emotion.</p>
		<p>4. Atman (soul) is a part of Lord Krishna.</p>
		<p>5. Souls are under the influence of matter in physical form.</p>
		<p>6. Souls are not under the influence of matter in liberated state.</p>
		<p>7. Atman is different and identical to Paramatman.</p>
		<p>8. Practising pure devotion is the way to attain liberation.</p>
		<p>9. Attaining the pure love of Lord Krishna is the ultimate goal.</p>
		<p>10. Lord Krishna is the only blessing to be received.</p>

Name	Year and Place	Details
Eknath	1533–1599 AD Maharashtra	He was also a Varkari saint and was influenced by Sufi mysticism and Vedanta philosophy. His famous work is Eknathi Bhagavata (a commentary on the <i>Bhagavata Gita</i>). He was one of the first bhakti reformers who emphasised on the growth of Marathi language. His pen name was 'Eka-janardana'. He also gave importance to kirtana (singing God's names), nama smarana (remembering God's name) and meditation (dhyana).
Dadu Dayal	1544–1603 AD Gujarat	Dadu Dayal was extremely devoted to Kabir. He was a contemporary of Mughal Emperor Akbar. It is believed that Akbar held him with high regard. 'Dadu' means brother, and 'Dayal' means 'the compassionate one'. He rejected the authority of the Vedas, caste system and external forms of worship such as visits to temples and pilgrimages. Instead, he concentrated on <i>japa</i> (repeating the name of God). His followers are called Dadupanthis . His teachings are compiled in the name of 'Dadu Dayaram ki Bani'. Janagopal, a disciple of Dadu, wrote the first biography of Dadu.
Tukaram	17th century AD Maharashtra	He was also a devotee of Vitthala or Vithoba (God of Varkari sect). He is famous for his devotional poetry known as Abhangas and promoted Kirtans. He was against gender discrimination and the caste system.
Samarth Ramdas	1608–1681 AD Maharashtra	He was a devotee of Lord Rama and Hanumana and is famous for his Advaita Vedanta text Dasbodh . He was the founder of the Samarth sect. Shivaji had great respect for Saint Ramdas.
Guru Ghasidas	1756–1850 AD Chhattisgarh	He believed in equality and strongly criticised the caste system. He established the ' Satnami Community '. Moreover, he was against idol worship, i.e., he belonged to the Nirguna school. The sect has an understanding of God as satnam (he whose name is truth). The Government of Chhattisgarh renamed a part of Sanjay-Dubri Tiger Reserve after him, that is, Guru Ghasidas National Park.

Women in the Bhakti Movement

Women also played an important role in the Bhakti movement. Many of them had to struggle a lot in order to gain acceptance within the male-dominated movement. The women saints rejected traditional societal norms and left home for their devotion. Some of them were involved in the Bhakti movement within their households.

Important female saints were:

Mirabai

Mirabai was from a ruling Rajput family and was married to the son of Rana Sanga of Mewar. But she treated Lord Krishna as her husband. Her poems say – Krishna is a yogi and lover, and being his yogini, she is ready to take her place by his side into a spiritual marital bliss. One of her most popular compositions remains '*Paayoji Maine Ram Ratan Dhan Paayo*' which means 'I have been given the richness of God's name blessing'. Guru Raidas was the preceptor of Mirabai.



Akkamahadevi

She was a 12th-century bhakti saint who belonged to the southern Karnataka. She was called 'Akka', which means elder sister, by great philosophers of her time – Basavanna, Prabhu Deva, Madivalayya and Chenna Basavanna. She was a devotee of Lord Shiva.



Janabai

Coming from the Shudra caste, she worked in the household of saint Namdeva, one of the most respected Bhakti saints. She did not have any formal education. In spite of that, she composed over 300 poems, mostly pertaining to her life – domestic chores or about the restrictions she faced being a low caste woman.



Bahina

She was a 17th-century poet-saint of Maharashtra. She wrote different abhangas that portrayed the working life of women, especially in the fields.



Andal

She was the only female Alvar. Her poems expressed her unconditional love for Lord Vishnu.

Note: *Kirtan* is a Sanskrit word in which narrating, reciting, recounting and describing of a story is done.

Bhakti literature and its Contribution to Indian Culture

Bhakti literature refers to devotional poetry, songs, and scriptures. Bhakti movement included religions like Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, Sikhism etc.

Nature of Bhakti Literature

- **Devotion:** Bhakti literature has extreme devotions where devotees express their love and surrender themselves to the God.
- **Local languages:** Bhakti literature was mainly composed of vernacular languages which makes it accessible to all classes of the society.
- **Unorthodox approach:** Unlike earlier Vedic traditions that focused on rituals and sacrifices, Bhakti literature emphasised on an intimate relationship with God.
- **Secular, non-sectarian and tolerant:** Bhakti literature does not emphasize on one's caste, social status, or gender. It accepted various paths to worship and it fostered religious harmony.

Contribution of Bhakti Literature to Indian Culture

- **Improved ethical values:** Bhakti literature encouraged compassion, non-violence, and righteous living.

- **Preservation of Languages:** Bhakti literature contributed to the development of local languages and thus preserved linguistic diversity.
- **Helped in cultural enrichment:** It influenced arts like music (Kirtana, Qawwali), dance (Sattariya), and paintings of devotional themes.
- **Helped in Unity and Inclusivity:** Bhakti literature played an important role in breaking the barriers of caste, creed, and social status.

Impact of the Bhakti Movement

- The Bhakti movement was able to uplift the position of women and members of the lower strata of the society.
- Various preachers of the Bhakti movement spoke and wrote in the regional languages which provided an impetus for the development of regional languages such as Hindi, Marathi, Bengali, Kannada, etc.
- The movement helped in the development of a new philosophy of a life of charity and service to fellow human beings.
- Synthesis of the Bhakti tradition and Sufism also helped in fostering unity among the Hindu and Muslim communities.

The Sufi Movement

Origin

Sufism is the mystical arm of Islam and is better known as **tasawwuf**. It stresses on self-realisation, tolerance, righteousness and universal love for all. The word finds its roots in the Arabic word for wool (*suf*), indicative of the garments of rough wool worn by the ascetics and even the prophets. The word 'Sufism' is sometimes also traced to the root word *safā* which in Arabic means purity. In India, Sufi movement started around 1300 AD and it came to South India in the 15th century.

Characteristics

- The Sufis tried to purify their inner self by rigid introspection and mental struggle so as to remove even the smallest sign of selfishness and attain *ikhlas* (absolute purity of intention and acts).
- The mystics realised that beyond the knowledge of outward sciences, intuitive knowledge was required in order to receive that illumination to which reason has no access.

- Sufism strictly follows the Pir-Murshidie tradition (similar to Guru-Shishya tradition).
- The ultimate goal of Sufism is **union with God**.
- According to Sufism, Love of God meant **love towards humanity** and the Sufis therefore believe service to humanity equals service of God.
- Sufism inculcated a spirit of **tolerance** among its followers.
- The essential characteristics of Sufism are as follows:
 - ❖ **Fana:** Spiritual merger of the devotee with Allah
 - ❖ **Insan-e-kamil:** Perfect human with all good virtues
 - ❖ **Zikr-tauba:** Remembrance of God all the time (zikr)
 - ❖ **Wahadat-al-wujud:** One God for the entire universe; unity of God and being
 - ❖ **Sama:** Spiritual dance and music to promote their concepts, but the music is not Islamic
- The Sufis **rejected elaborate rituals** but did not promote strict asceticism as the Bhakti saints did.
- Their religious outlook was borrowed not only from Islam but also from Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Zoroastrianism, etc. Most Sufis in India conceived and preached divine unity in terms of idealistic monoism and many Hindus found Sufi ideas very similar to those of Vedantic philosophy.
- They believed in the equality of all human beings and **universal brotherhood** of man.
- The early Sufis were not only ascetics but also lived a life of voluntary poverty, shunning all types of worldly pleasures.
- Most of the Sufis use the vocabulary of love and intimate affection while describing their experience with God. It was a badge of honour for the Sufi to be known as a lover of God or Sufi masters.

The Sufi saints were *Fakirs* (poor man) or *Dervishes* (standing by the door for alms). According to some historians, there were three stages in the history of Sufism:

Stage	Period	Character
First stage: Khanqah	10th century	Also called the Age of Golden Mysticism
Second stage: Tariqa	11th–14th century	When Sufism was being institutionalised and traditions and symbols started being attached to it.
Third stage: Tarifa	15th century onwards	The stage when Sufism became a popular movement.

Lands which were the abode of war became lands of peace (Dar-al-Islam) after coming under the Sufis' spiritual authority.

The basic tenets of Sufism included the concept of '**purity**'. Sufism became the process of purification of hearts (*tasfiyat al-qulub*) which means a rigorous ethical discipline based on **meditative exercises**. The basic belief in Sufic philosophy is the primacy of inner reality and believing that God was the first, the last and the outer and the inner.

The Sufi khanqah was not without its hierarchies. The Sufi saint had obtained *wilaya* or the Islamic doctrine of sainthood, which made him close to God and was protected by the grace of God. There are many terms for the teacher and guide like *pir* or *sheikh* whose main task was to transmit the teachings to the student, that is the ***murid***. Chief disciples are chosen to act as the successor (*khalifa*) or representative (*muqqaddam*) of the master. There was an unspoken and invisible spiritual and territorial authority of the saints. Those who were from all ordinary classes and castes occupied the outer level but were not *murids*.

Prominent Sufi Terms and Practices

Name	Details
Dhikr	It is an Islamic devotional act in which phrases or prayers are repeated. A person who recites the Dhikr is called a <i>dakir</i> . The content of the prayers includes the name of God, or a <i>dua</i> (prayer of supplication) taken from the Hadith or the Quran.
Sama	It is a work of vocal music that is either sung <i>without</i> or <i>with</i> instruments within Islam.
Hajj	It is a form of pilgrimage to sites associated with Prophet Muhammad, his family members and descendants and his companions and other venerated figures in Islam.
Wadhah	It is a form of Sufi meditation. Practising it may lead to all stages of perfection. It is to detach oneself from worldly pursuits for a period of time with the intention of nurturing the spiritual guidance.
Qurbat	It is a collective supererogatory ritual performed by Sufi orders.
Qurbani	Death anniversary of a Sufi saint.
Qutub	Collection of the sermons of a Sufi saint.
Qurbani	Spiritual affinity that develops between God and human beings.

Different Sufi Orders in India

The Sufis came to be organised into orders or 'silsilahs'. **Ain-i-Akbari** mentions a dozen silsilahs. They were divided into 'Be-shara' (against Sharia law) and 'Ba-shara' (in favour of Sharia law).

The **Ba-shara Sufis** followed the law of Islam (i.e., Sharia) and the silsilah (order) founded by one saint was continued by his disciples. Some prominent silsilahs or Sufi orders were – **Chishti, Suhrawardi, Firdausi, Qadariya, Naqshbandi**, etc.

The **Be-shara** did not believe in Sharia law. They came to be called 'Mast Kalandars/Malangs/Haidaris'. These wandering saints were commonly known as '**babas**'. They hardly left any written accounts. Usually, they followed very harsh forms of asceticism and defied or ignored the rituals.

Chishti Silsilah

The **Chishti** order was founded in India by Khwaja Moinuddin Chishti (1143–1236 AD). It began in Chist, a small town near Herat in Afghanistan, in 930 AD. Chishti derives its name from the same town of Chisht in Afghanistan. **Khwaja Moinuddin Chishti** established his khanqah in Ajmer to work for the poorest sections of the society. After his demise, every year an annual congregation (Urs) is held at **Ajmer**. It is the most widespread among the Sufi orders. Mughal

Princess Jahanara Begum, daughter of Shah Jahan and Mumtaz Mahal, wrote '**Munis al arwah**' (Confidant of Spirits), which is the biography of Sheikh Muinuddin Chisti.

Its philosophy was based on the concept of '**panthetic monoism**', that is **Wahdat-al-wujud**, which is very similar to the Vedantic philosophy.

Some of the other renowned Sufi saints of this order include the following:

- **Qutbuddin Bakhtiyar Kaki:** He was the direct disciple of Khwaja Moinuddin Chishti. Politics were so deeply interlinked with religion that Qutub-ud-din Aibak started building the Qutub Minar in his memory.
- **Sheikh Salim Chishti:** He was one of the famous Sufi mystics during the Mughal period, who introduced the concept of 'The Chishti Silsila' in the Mughal empire. He was one of the favourite persons of Mughal emperor Akbar. Akbar named his first son 'Salim' (later emperor Jahangir) in the honour of Chishti. The tomb of Sheikh Salim Chisti, located within the quadrangle of the Jama Masjid in Fatehpur Sikri, Uttar Pradesh, is considered to be one of the finest examples of Mughal architecture in India.
- **Fariduddin Ganjshakar:** He is popularly known as **Baba Farid** and propagated Sufism mainly in the **Punjab region**. He used to say that hunger is the root cause of trouble.
- **Sheikh Nizamuddin Auliya:** Known as Mahbub-e-Ilahi. He believed in drawing close to God through renunciation of the world and service to humanity. **Amir Khusrau** was his most famous disciple.
- **Sheikh Nasiruddin Mahmud:** He was given the title '*Chiraag-e-Dilli*' or Lamp of Delhi.
- **Sheikh Hamiduddin of Nagaur:** He was given the title '*Sultan-e-Tarkeen*'. He translated many Persian books into Hindi.
- **Sheikh Burhanuddin Gharib:** He was the founder of the Chishti community in South India.

Chishti Literature

*Early Chishti teachings are compiled in two important Sufi texts. They are – **Shaykh Shihb al-Din Suhraward's Awarif al-Ma'arif** and **Ali Hujwiri's Kashf al-Mahjub**. These writings are followed even today.*

Suhrawardi Silsilah

This Silsilah was founded by **Sheikh Shihabuddin Suhrawardi** in Baghdad but it was established in India by **Sheikh Bahauddin Zakariya** (1182–1262) who was given the title of '*Sheikh-ul-islam*' by Iltutmish. He opened his first khanqah in **Multan**.

The order believed that a Sufi should own the three attributes of **property**, **knowledge** and **hal** (mystical enlightenment). They observed religious rituals and advocated fusion of mysticism and 'ilm' (scholarship). Chisti practices like bowing before initiation onto the silsilah, were rejected by the Suhrawardis. They became popular in Punjab, Sindh, Kashmir and parts of Bengal. Suhrawardi Silsilah reached its zenith under Sheikh Ruknuddin (1251–1335 AD). Another notable Suhrawardi saint is Sayyid Nuruddin Mubarak.

Qadiriyya Silsilah

Shah Nimatullah introduced this silsilah in India. It became popular in Punjab (especially Sindh). The pirs of this order supported the concept of **Wahadat al-wujud**. Miyan Mir was one of the famous pirs of this silsilah and enrolled Prince **Dara Shikoh**. His influence can be seen in the writings of Dara. Urdu poets **Hasrat Mohani** and **Muhammad Iqbal** belonged to this order.

Naqshbandi Silsilah

The Naqshbandi order was established by **Khwaja Baha-ud-Din Naqshband** in India. The most popular saint of the silsilah was **Ahmad Sirhindi**. He gave himself the title of 'Mujaddid' or the reformer of the new millennium. This silsilah became popular during the reign of **Akbar**. It was radical in nature and had **Aurangzeb as one of its followers**.

Shattari Silsilah

It was established by **Sheikh Sirajuddin Abdullah Shattar** and became popular in *Malwa, Jaunpur and Bengal*. **Tansen**, the legendary musician of Akbar's court, was also a follower of this order.

Kubrawiya Order

It was founded by **Najm-ad-Din Kubra** in modern Turkmenistan. It remained confined to those areas and it did not undergo any major expansion. It is also known as **Firdausia Silsilah** and is popular in Eastern India, Bangladesh and Mauritius.

Importance of Sufi Saints

- Most of the Sufi saints were given land grants or *inam* grants, which **they could pass on** to their descendants. These actions institutionalised the cult of the sheikh and gave an economic base to his descendants to move up the social ladder.
- The Sufis extended their **spiritual authority** over the world and leased their **political sovereignty** to kings, charging them with the worldly business of administration, warfare, taxation and so forth.
- They promoted **religious brotherhood** and **equality** amongst the masses. They also wrote in vernacular or local languages so that more and more people could hear or read their songs and messages.
- Although Sufi shrines had important economic socio-political effects across the social divide, from the masses of the villages to the sultans of the realms, yet their main function was to be a **religious institution**.

- Hence, we may conclude that although the Sufis might **not** have had the power of the *sharia* to back them up legally, but, in the sphere of customs and masses, they **won hearts and allegiance** more than the *Ulema* or the priests did.



Impact of Sufism

- The most important contribution of Sufism is that it helped to bridge the gap between the Hindu and Muslim communities and bring both these **communities closer to each other**.
- Sufism took **roots in both rural and urban areas** and exercised a deep social, political and cultural influence on the masses. Sufism tried to bring in **peace and harmony**.

CHAPTER SUMMARY

- Bhakti movement** – originated in southern parts of India – during the 6th to 10th century AD – comprises two schools – Saguna School and Nirguna School.
- Saguna school** – incarnations of gods with definite form, quality and positive attributes – worshipping of idols and images – acceptance of the spiritual authority of the Vedas – Prominent saints: Ramanuja, Ramananda, Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, etc.
- Nirguna school** – emphasised acquiring knowledge – condemned every form of idol worship – imagined God as formless with no attributes and qualities – Prominent saints: Kabir, Guru Nanak, Dadu Dayal, etc.
- In South India, the Saguna School was further classified** as Alvars and Nayanars – Alvars were poet-saints and devotees of Lord Vishnu – Nayanars were poet-saints and devotees of Lord Shiva.
- Women in the Bhakti Movement** – female saints like Mirabai, Akkamahadevi and Bahina played an important role in the Bhakti movement – they rejected traditional societal norms – some of them were involved in the Bhakti movement within their households.
- Virashaiva** – Followers were called Lingayats – emerged in the 12th century AD in Karnataka – Shaivite sect founded by Basavanna – challenged the caste system – encouraged re-marriage of widows.
- Bhakti literature and its contribution to Indian culture** – improved ethical values – emphasised on local language – helped in cultural enrichment – helped in building unity.
- Sufism** – mystical arm of Islam – also known as tasawwuf – organised into orders or silsilahs – stressed on self-realisation, tolerance, righteousness and universal love – union with God is the ultimate goal.
- Chishti Silsilah** – founded by Khwaja Moinuddin Chishti – established his khanqah in Ajmer – philosophical base is panthetic monoism, i.e., Wahdat-al-wujud – Amir Khusrau was the disciple of Sufi Saint Sheikh Nizamuddin Auliya.
- Suhrawardi Silsilah** – founded by Sheikh Shihabuddin Suhrawardi – established in India by Sheikh Bahauddin Zakariya during the reign of Iltutmish – believed that a Sufi should have three attributes – property, knowledge and hal.

- ✿ **Qadiriyya Silsilah** – introduced by Shah Nimatullah – supported the concept of Wahadat al-wujud
– Miyan Mir was one of the famous pirs of this silsilah who enrolled Dara Shikoh.
- ✿ **Naqshbandi Silsilah** – established by Khwaja Baha-ud-Din Naqshband in India – became popular during the reign of Akbar – Aurangzeb was one of its followers.

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CHAPTER

BUDDHISM AND JAINISM



Buddhism

Buddhism is one of the major religions of the world that originated from the Indian sub-continent and has now spread to large parts of South-east Asia. The origin of Buddhism is attached to the story of **Siddhartha** who came to be known as **Buddha**. The traditions, beliefs and practices in Buddhism are attributed to Buddha. It is the **world's fourth largest religion** after

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Christianity, Islam and Hinduism. Around **7 per cent** of the world's population embraces Buddhism. Buddhists make up **0.7 per cent** of India's population, or around 8.4 million individuals, with the majority being in **Maharashtra**.

Causes of the Origin of Buddhism (as it is believed)

- ❖ Reaction of the Kshatriyas against the domination of the Brahmanas.
- ❖ Patronising of Buddhism and Jainism by the Vaishyas and other mercantile groups who wanted a better social status and a regime of peace.
- ❖ Ready acceptance of simple, ascetic, peace-centred principles of Buddhism by the general people.

Textual Sources of Buddhism

Our understanding of Gautama Buddha and the various facets of Buddhism is derived mostly from early Buddhist literature. Early Buddhist literature is generally divided into **canonical and non-canonical texts**.

- ❖ **Canonical texts:** These are directly linked to Gautama Buddha in one way or another, such as the Tripitakas.

The **Jatakas** contain the details of Buddha's previous lives. There are 547 poems altogether similar to folklore literature. In Sanskrit, they are known as the **Jatakamala**.

Niddesa or **Mahaniddesa** – It is a commentary on the Suttanipata's first and second chapters.

- ❖ **Buddhavamsa** contains the story of the lives and acts of early 24 Buddhas who came before Gautama.
- ❖ **Patisambhidamagga** – It is a systematic and practical presentation of the path of liberation with knowledge suggested by Buddha.
- ❖ **Apadanas** – It is a collection of biographical stories describing the actions of young monks and nuns who acquired the level of Arhats.

- ❖ **Non-canonical texts:** These are commentaries and observation on canonical texts, and are not the sayings of Buddha. They are Buddhist treatises on dharma, Dharmapada, historical information, quotes and definitions. Examples include *Milinda Panha*, *Nettipakarana*, *Visuddhimagga*, *Nidanakatha*, *Dipavamsa*, *Mahavamsa* and *Mahavastu*.

- ❖ **Milindapanha** – It is known as 'Milinda's Questions'. It presents the conversation between Milinda, the Graeco-Bactrian King Menander, and the monk Nagasena.
- ❖ **Mahavamsa** and **Dipavamsa** are two well-known Sri Lankan Buddhist texts which provide information about the close relationships between India and Sri Lanka. Mahavamsa talks about the royal dynasties of the Indian subcontinent and Sri Lanka whereas Dipavamsa deals with the arrival of Buddha's teachings and preachers in Sri Lanka.

(detailed in Chapter 20 – Indian Literature)



Brief History of Buddha

Gautama Buddha was born at **Lumbini** (in present-day Nepal) in **563 BC** as Siddhartha Gautama, to **Queen Maya and King Suddhodana** of the **Sakyan** kingdom under the **Kshatriya clan**. He was born on the auspicious day of **Vaishakhi Purnima**. He was **married to Princess Yashodhara** and had a son named **Rahula**.

At the age of **29**, he left his house riding on his **horse Kanthaka** along with the **charioteer Channa**, to find the truth of life, wandering as an ascetic for the next six years of his life. He then went to Gaya (Bihar) and sat under a **pipal tree**, where he meditated about everything and freed himself from all worldly attachments and discovered the truth, the secret of happiness. **At the age of 35** (on the same day of his birth), he attained **enlightenment (Nirvana) under that pipal tree** and became the Buddha, the Enlightened One.

After attaining **Nirvana in Bodh Gaya**, he preached his **first sermon** to his five companions at the **Deer Park in Sarnath** near Varanasi. This event came to be known as **Dharmachakra Pravartana** (Turning the Wheel of Law).



Buddha

Associated Symbols	Related to Events in Buddha's Life
Bull Elephant Lotus Foot Print	Birth
Horse Gandhakuti (believed to be a chamber for the Buddha's use) Empty Throne Begging Bowl	Great Renunciation
Vajrasana Bodhi Tree	Enlightenment (Nirvana)
Dharmachakra Lion Deer	Sermons (Teachings)
Stupa	Death (Parinirvana)

First five disciples/companions of Buddha (at Sarnath)

1. Kaudinya
2. Bhadrika
3. Vashpa
4. Mahanaman
5. Ashvajit

The **three jewels (triratnas)** embraced under Buddhism are as follows:

Buddha

The Enlightened One

Dhamma

Teachings of Buddha (doctrine)

Sangha

The Monastic Order

Out of the three jewels or triratnas, the concept of **Sangha (the Order)** was initiated by Buddha at the time of his first sermon at Sarnath. These five companions along with Buddha became a Sangha (a group).

Buddha attained **Mahaparinirvana** at **Kushinagar** (Malla Mahajanapada) in Uttar Pradesh at the age of 80 around **483 BC**. He is said to have been a contemporary for a major part of his life to King **Bimbisara**, and for the last few years to **Ajatashatru** of the Haryanka dynasty.

Buddha is known in various Buddhist texts also as **Tathagata and Shakyamuni**. The predecessor of Buddha under Buddhism was **Kassapa Buddha** and his successor will be **Maitreya** (Future Buddha).

Early Buddhist Schools

After the passing of the Buddha, the original Sangha is believed to have split into the two early schools between 383 and 250 BC:

1. **Sthavira Nikaya** (sub-sects included Mahisasaka, Sarvastivada, Sankrantika, Sautrantika, Dharmaguptaka, Vatsiputriya, Dharmottariya, Bhadrayaniya, Sannagarika and Sammitiya)
2. **Mahasamghika** (sub-sects included Gokulika, Prajnapativada, Bahusrutiya, Ekavyaharikas and Caitika)

Other sub-sects not identified under the above two schools were Hemavatika, Rajagiriya, Siddhatthaka, Pubbaseliya, Aparaseliya and Apararajagirika.

Later Buddhist schools include Theravada, Mahayana and Vajrayana.



Concepts and Philosophy under Buddhism

The basic tenets of Buddhism are explained through the **four major noble truths**:

1. The truth of suffering (*dukkha*)
2. The truth of the origin of suffering (*samudaya*)
3. The truth of the cessation of suffering (*nirodha*)
4. The truth of the path to the cessation of suffering (*marga*)

That is, life is full of suffering (*dukkha*). All aspects of life contain the seeds of sorrow. Sorrow is caused by desires. This keeps a person caught in *samsara*, the endless cycle of repeated rebirth, *dukkha* and dying again. If one gets rid of desires and needs, then one can be free and at peace. This can be attained through the following '**Noble Eightfold Path**':

1. Kind, truthful and *right speech*
2. Honest, peaceful and *right action*
3. To find the *right livelihood* which does not harm any being
4. *Right effort* and cultivating self-control
5. *Right mindfulness*

6. Right meditation and concentrating on the meaning of life
7. The worth of the sincere and intelligent man is through *right thoughts*
8. Avoid superstition and cultivate *right understanding*

According to Buddha, **the Middle Path (Madhyam Marg) or Middle Way** describes the character of the Noble Eightfold Path that leads to liberation.

Buddhism **rejects the authenticity of the Vedas**. It also **rejects the concept of existence of the Soul (atman) unlike Jainism**.

Once Buddha attained Mahaparinirvana at Kushinagar in 483 BC, there was a need to compile his teachings, and hence four Buddhist Councils were held in a span of the next 500 years to collate this material into **Pitakas**. The result was the writing of three major pitakas – **Vinaya, Sutta** and **Abhidhamma**, that when combined were called **Tripitaka**. All of these have been written in the **Pali language**.



Songs of Buddhist Nuns

Ubbiri's Song

A woman from Shravasti named Ubbiri had an encounter with Buddha while she was lamenting the death of her daughter Jiva. She attained **Arahantship** (*one who attained enlightenment as a result of listening to and practising the teachings of Buddha*) as an upasika. The dialogue between Buddha and Ubbiri is known as Ubbiri's song.

Mitta's Song

A Sakya woman of Kapilavastu named Mitta described her struggles and observations and later became a Buddhist bhikkhuni or nun. Her description is known as Mitta's song.

Therigatha

The **Therigatha**, the ninth book of the **Khuddaka Nikaya**, is a Buddhist text. It is a collection of short poems having lyric excellence of early enlightened women who were elder nuns. It consists of 73 poems with 522 stanzas in all.

Four Buddhist Councils

Buddhist Council	Place and Year	Patronage by and Chairman of the Council	Details
First Buddhist Council	At Rajgir (around 483 BC) It was held at the Saptaparni Cave immediately after the death of the Buddha.	Under the patronage of King Ajatashatru. Chairman – Mahakasyapa	Upali recited Vinaya Pitaka, which contains the rules of the Buddhist order. Anand, the other disciple of Buddha, recited Sutta Pitaka, containing the great collection of Buddha's sermons on matters of doctrine and ethical beliefs.

Buddhist Council	Place and Year	Patronage by and Chairman of the Council	Details
Second Buddhist Council	At Vaishali (383 BC) It was held approximately 100 years after the death of the Buddha.	Under the patronage of King Kalashoka . Chairman – Sabakami	Mainly due to the 10 disputed points under the Vinaya Pitaka.
Third Buddhist Council	At Patliputra (250 BC)	Under the patronage of King Ashoka . Chairman – Moggaliputtatissa	Compilation of Abhidhamma Pitaka took place.
Fourth Buddhist Council	At Kundalavana, Kashmir (72 AD)	Under the patronage of King Kanishka . Chairman – Vasumitra	Resulted in the division of Buddhism into Hinayana and Mahayana. Asvaghosha (the deputy of Vasumitra) participated in this council and all the deliberations were made in Sanskrit. A fourth Buddhist Council was held at Sri Lanka.

It is recorded that in the fourth council in King Kanishka's reign, there was a split in Buddhism and two sects were born: **Hinayana** and **Mahayana** Buddhism. In the later periods, it can be found that the Hinayana school declined and two more new schools under Buddhism were born. Thus, the following four major schools developed under Buddhism:

1. **Hinayana Buddhism**
2. **Mahayana Buddhism**
3. **Theravada Buddhism**
4. **Vajrayana Buddhism**

Practices of Buddhism include taking refuge in the Buddha, the *dhamma* and the *sangha*, study of scriptures, observance of moral precepts, renunciation of craving and attachment, the practice of meditation, the cultivation of wisdom, loving-kindness and compassion, the **Mahayana practice of Bodhicitta** and the **Vajrayana practices of generation stage and completion stage**.

In **Theravada**, the ultimate goal is the **cessation of the kleshas** and attainment of the sublime state of Nirvana, achieved by practising the Noble Eightfold Path, thus escaping what is seen as a cycle of suffering and rebirth.

Rather than Nirvana, the Mahayana sect instead aspires for Buddhahood via the bodhisattva path, a state wherein one remains in the cycle of rebirth to help other beings to reach an awakening.

The four schools or sects are discussed below in detail.

Hinayana Buddhism

- It means the **lesser vehicle**.
- The school includes the followers of the **original preaching** of the Buddha. It is more of an **orthodox school**.

- They **did not believe in idol or image worship** of Buddha.
- They believe in **individual salvation** and try to attain it through self-discipline and meditation. The ultimate aim of Hinayana is **Nirvana**.
- One of the sub-sects of Hinayana is **Sthaviravada or Theravada**.
- The Hinayana scholars used the **Pali language** to interact with the masses.
- **Emperor Ashoka** patronised the **Hinayana sect** as the Mahayana school came into being much later.
- Hinayana school in its original form is almost non-existent in the present age.

Mahayana Buddhism

- It means the **greater vehicle**.
- The school is more liberal and believes in the heavenliness of Buddha and **bodhisattvas** embodying Buddha-nature. The ultimate goal under Mahayana Buddhism is 'spiritual upliftment'.
- Mahayana followers **believe in idol or image worship** of Buddha.
- The concept of **Bodhisattva** is the result of Mahayana Buddhism.
- Mahayana is also called '**Bodhisattvayana**', or the '**Bodhisattva Vehicle**'.
- That is to say, the followers believe in the bodhisattva concept of salvation of all conscious individuals.
- In other words, they believe in *universal liberation from suffering of all beings*.
- A bodhisattva seeks complete enlightenment for the benefit of all beings. A bodhisattva who has accomplished this goal is called a **samyaksambuddha**.
- Prominent Mahayana texts include the **Lotus Sutra and Mahavamsa**.
- As per the Lotus Sutra, the Mahayana school believes in **six perfections (or paramitas)** to be followed by an individual:
 - i. *Dana (generosity)*
 - ii. *Sila (virtue, morality, discipline and proper conduct)*
 - iii. *Kshanti (patience, tolerance, acceptance)*
 - iv. *Virya (energy, diligence, vigour, effort)*
 - v. *Dhyana (one-pointed concentration)*
 - vi. *Prajna (wisdom and insight)*
- As per scholars, one of the sub-sects of Mahayana being developed in the later periods was **Vajrayana**.
- The Mahayana scholars predominantly used **Sanskrit**.
- **Emperor Kanishka** of the Kushan dynasty is said to be the **founder** of the Mahayana sect of Buddhism in the 1st century AD.

- At present, the **majority of Buddhist followers** in the world belong to the Mahayana sect (around **53.2 per cent** as per a 2010 report).
- Other countries following it include Nepal, Bangladesh, Japan, Vietnam, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Mongolia, China, Bhutan and Tibet.

Schools under Mahayana Buddhism

Mahayana Buddhism has two principal schools in India:

1. **Madhyamaka School** – This sub-school under Mahayana Buddhism is based on **Sunyata Doctrine** and was founded by a very prominent Buddhist philosopher **Nagarjuna** in the 2nd–3rd century AD. The central idea of Sunyata Doctrine under Mahayana Buddhism lies in the fact that all things or phenomena (*dharmas*) are empty (*sunya*) of nature, substance or the essence (*svabhava*). **Chandrakirti** and **Shantideva** were great scholars of this school.
2. **Yogacara School** – It is also called the 'Mind Only' school. It is an influential tradition of Buddhist philosophy and psychology, emphasising on the study of **cognition, perception and consciousness** through the interior lens of **meditative and yogic practices**. Key Yogacara features include cognition (*vijnaptimatra*), three self-natures (*trisvabhava*), the *Alayavijnana* (warehouse consciousness), overturning the basis (*asrayaparavrtti*) and the theory of eight consciousnesses. Its founding is ascribed to two brothers, **Asanga** and **Vasubandhu**. The teachings of the Yogacara school were introduced into China by the 7th century monk traveller *Xuanzang*.

Bodhisattva in Buddhism

Bodhisattva is the one who has generated **bodhicitta** (a spontaneous wish and a compassionate mind) to attain **Buddhahood** for the benefit of all sentient beings. It believes in **universal liberation** and is a concept under **Mahayana Buddhism**.

Buddha in his previous births was thought to be a bodhisattva as contemplated in the Jataka tales, and the stories depict the various attempts of the bodhisattva to embrace qualities like self-sacrifice and morality.

Under Theravada Buddhism, a person whose aim is to become fully enlightened is still subject to birth, illness, death, sorrow, defilement and delusion.

On the path to become a Buddha, a bodhisattva proceeds through **10 grounds or bhumis**, namely *great joy, stainless, luminous, radiant, very difficult to train, obviously transcendent, gone afar, immovable, good discriminating wisdom and cloud of Dharma*.

By passing these 10 bhumis, he becomes an enlightened one.

Prominent Bodhisattvas under Buddhism include the following:

1. **Avalokitesvara**: One of the three protective deities around Buddha. He is described as **holding a Lotus Flower** and is also known as **Padmapani**. His painting can be found at the **Ajanta Caves** and is the most acknowledged among all the Bodhisattvas. The **bodhisattva of compassion**, the listener of the world's cries who uses skilful means to

come to their aid. He appears unofficially in Theravada Buddhism in Cambodia under the name **Lokesvara**.

2. **Vajrapani:** One of three protective deities around Buddha and is also depicted in the Ajanta Caves. Vajrapani is considered to manifest all the **powers** of Buddha as well as the power of all five tathagatas, namely Vairocana, Akshobhya, Amitabha, Ratnasambhava and Amoghasiddhi.
3. **Manjusri:** One of the three protective deities around Buddha and is also depicted in the Ajanta Caves. He is associated with **the Wisdom** of Buddha and is a male Bodhisattva with a wielding sword in his hand.

To conclude, Avalokitesvara manifests Buddha's compassion, Vajrapani manifests Buddha's power and Manjusri contemplates Buddha's wisdom.



Padmapani and Vajrapani at Ajanta Caves

4. **Samantabhadra:** Is associated with practice and meditation. Together with the Buddha and Manjusri, he forms the **Shakyamuni trinity** in Buddhism.
5. **Ksitigarbha:** He is depicted as a Buddhist monk and took a vow not to achieve Buddhahood till hell is completely emptied.
6. **Maitreya:** A **Future Buddha** who will appear on Earth in the future, achieve complete enlightenment and teach pure dharma. **Laughing Buddha** is said to be an incarnation of Maitreya.
7. **Akasagarbha:** Is associated with the element of space.
8. **Tara:** Is associated with **Vajrayana Buddhism** and represents the virtues of success in work and achievements.
9. **Vasudhara:** Is associated with wealth, prosperity and abundance. Popular in **Nepal**.
10. **Skanda:** Guardian of the viharas and the Buddhist teachings.
11. **Sitatapatra:** She is considered a protector against supernatural danger and is worshipped in both Mahayana and Vajrayana traditions.

Dipankar Buddha

Dipankara was one of the Buddhas of the past who **reached enlightenment prior to Gautama Buddha**. As per Buddhism, Dipankara was a previous Buddha, Gautama being the most recent Buddha and Maitreya to be the future Buddha. He is respected under all three sub-sects of Buddhism – Mahayana, Vajrayana and even Theravada.

Theravada Buddhism

- ✿ It refers to the school of **elder monks**.
- ✿ The school uses Buddha's teaching preserved in the **Pali Canon** (only existing as a complete Buddhist canon) as its doctrinal core.
- ✿ In Theravada, the ultimate goal is the **cessation of the kleshas** and the attainment of the sublime state of Nirvana, achieved by practising the Noble Eightfold Path, thus escaping what is seen as a cycle of suffering and rebirth. **Kleshas include states of mind such as anxiety, fear, anger, jealousy, desire and depression.**

According to the Theravada tradition, **Samatha** and **Vipassana** form an integral part of the *Noble Eightfold Path* as described by the Buddha. Samatha deals with **calming the mind** and Vipassana means insight into the three marks of existence: **impermanence, suffering and the realisation of non-self**.

Theravada believes in the concept of **vibhajjavada**, i.e., 'teaching of analysis'.

Visuddhimagga (The Path of Purification) is a great treatise on Theravada Buddhist School, written by *Buddhaghosa* during the 5th century AD in Sri Lanka.

- ✿ It discusses the **seven stages of purification** (*satta-visuddhi*) to be followed under Theravada Buddhism to attain salvation.
- ✿ **Pali** is the sacred language of Theravada Buddhism.
- ✿ Theravada is contemplated to be a **successor of the Hinayana school**.
- ✿ Around **35.8 per cent** Buddhists in the world belong to the Theravada school.
- ✿ Countries following it include Sri Lanka, Cambodia, Laos, Thailand and Myanmar.

Vajrayana Buddhism (Tantric Buddhism)

- ✿ Scholars contemplate that Vajrayana school developed as a result of royal courts sponsoring both Buddhism and Shaivism, i.e., they say it was **influenced by Hinduism**.
- ✿ The **main deity is Tara** (a lady).
- ✿ It involved combining Brahmanical (Veda-based) rituals with Buddhist philosophies.
- ✿ Vajrayana is **based on Mahayana Buddhist philosophy**.
- ✿ This school believes in **Tantra, Mantra and Yantra** superiority as being a faster vehicle to liberation containing many skilful methods of tantric ritual.

- According to this school, the mantra is an easy path to achieve Buddhahood without the difficulties as compared to striving for six perfections or Paramitas under Mahayana.
- 5.7 per cent** of the world's Buddhist population follows it.
- Countries following it include **Tibet, Bhutan, Mongolia etc.**

Places Visited By Buddha

The kingdoms he visited are **Kosala and the Magadha Kingdom**. The places visited under these two kingdoms include *Kapilavastu, Rajgriha, Vaishali, Gaya, Bodh Gaya, Sarnath, Kosambi, Shravasti (capital of the Kosala Kingdom), Kushinagar, Nalanda, Mathura, Varanasi, Saket, Champapuri, etc.* Let us discuss some of them in brief:

Place	Presently located in	Historical importance
Bodh Gaya	Bihar	The place where Prince Siddhartha attained enlightenment (Nirvana) under the Bodhi Tree.
Champanagar	Bihar	The place where Buddha taught the <i>Kandaraka Sutta</i> , the famous <i>Sonadanda Sutta</i> and several other important discourses.
Gaya	Bihar	The place where the Buddha preached his famous Fire Sermon .
Gurpa	Bihar	The mountain where Mahakasyapa (Buddha's successor) waits for Maitreya or the future Buddha.
Indrasala Cave	Bihar	The place where Buddha taught <i>Sakkapanha Sutta</i> . It is believed that at this place, Sakka came to ask the Buddha his eight questions.
Jethian	Bihar	The town where the Buddha and King Bimbisara first met. In the 7th century AD, Jethian became famous as the seat of Jayasena, the greatest saint of the time. Chinese pilgrim Hiuen Tsang spent two years here studying with Jayasena.
Kapilavastu	Nepal	The town where Prince Siddhartha spent his first 30 years .
Kesariya	Bihar	The place where Buddha taught the famous <i>Kalama Sutta</i> in the last year of his life. In the time of the Buddha, this place was known as Kesaputta. Buddha, on his way to Kushinagar before attaining parinirvana, had donated the bhiksha patra (begging bowl or alms bowl) to the people of Vaishali here. Later, a stupa was built on the site of this incident. This Kesariya stupa was visited by both Fa-Hien as well as Hiuen Tsang. It is the largest stupa in India.
Kausambi	Uttar Pradesh	The place where Lord Buddha stayed and preached in the sixth and ninth year after attaining enlightenment.
Kushinagar	Uttar Pradesh	The town where Buddha died in a Saal forest and attained Mahaparinirvana at the age of 80. <i>Ramabhar Stupa</i> , also called a Mukutbandhan-Chaitya , is the cremation place of Buddha there.
Lumbini	Nepal	The garden where Prince Siddhartha was born and who later became the Buddha.
Mathura	Uttar Pradesh	Buddha only came to Mathura once. In the <i>Anguttara Nikaya</i> he says, 'Mathura has five disadvantages – the ground is uneven, there is a lot of dust, the dogs are fierce, there are evil spirits and it is difficult to get alms food'.

Place	Presently located in	Historical Importance
Nalanda	Bihar	The place where Buddha met and converted Maha Kasyapa (Buddha's successor). During his numerous visits, Buddha taught several important discourses here.
Patna	Bihar	Buddha passed through here several times including during his last journey to Kushinagar.
Prabhosa	Uttar Pradesh	The hill where the Buddha spent his sixth rains retreat in silence. It finds a mention in the travel memoirs of Xuanzang.
Pragbodhi	Bihar	The mountain where Prince Siddhartha practised austerities . The place is now known as Dhungeswara.
Rajgir	Bihar	The city is the scene of many important events in the Buddha's career. It was also an important place for Jain pilgrimage.
Sankasya or Sankissa	Uttar Pradesh	The place where legend says Buddha descended from Tusita Heaven . It is believed that Buddha spent three months at Tusita Heaven teaching <i>Abhidhamma Pitaka</i> to his mother and then descended back to earth at this village. There is one elephant capital located there.
Sarnath	Uttar Pradesh	Buddha gave his first sermons on the Middle Path, the Four Noble Truths and the Eightfold Path to his five fellow seekers in the Deer Park at Sarnath.
Shravasti or Savatthi	Uttar Pradesh	Shravasti is the city where the Buddha spent every rainy season of his last 20 years except one. He stayed in Jetavana monastery there which was gifted to him by a wealthy merchant. Jetavana was the place where the Buddha gave the majority of his teachings and discourses. The second holiest tree of Buddhism, Anandabodhi Tree is located in Jetavana.
Vaishali or Vesali	Bihar	After Enlightenment, Buddha frequently visited Vaishali. It is here where Buddha preached his last sermon before his death. The second Buddhist council was also convened here by King Kalashoka.

Ten Great Disciples of Buddha

1. **Sariputta** – He is considered to be the first of the Buddha's two **chief disciples**, together with Maudgalyayana. He was the first disciple the Buddha allowed to ordain other monks. In Theravada Buddhism, he is given a status close to a second Buddha. He is considered the disciple of the Buddha who was foremost in wisdom.
2. **Maudgalyayana or Mahamoggallana** – He is among the two **chief disciples** of Buddha. In Buddhist art, he is shown as one of the two disciples that accompany the Buddha.
3. **Mahakasyapa** – He was one of the close disciples and was the most senior member of the Order at the time of Buddha's death. He is called the **Father of the Sangha**. After the Buddha died, Mahakasyapa assumed a leadership position among the Buddha's surviving monks and nuns. He presided over the **first Buddhist Council**.
4. **Ananda** – He was one of his ten principal disciples. Ananda stood out for **having the best memory** (thus, also known as the *Treasurer of the Dhamma*). He accompanied the Buddha for

more than 20 years and was the Master's **favourite disciple**. He attained enlightenment after the demise of the Buddha under the guidance of Mahakasyapa. He listened to Buddha's teachings **the most** among others. The early texts attribute the **inclusion of women** in the early monastic order to Ananda.

5. **Purna Maitranyaniputra** – He was the **greatest teacher of Dharma or Law** out of all the 10 disciples.
6. **Anuruddha** – He was a **cousin** of Gautama Buddha. Anuruddha was present when Buddha died at Kushinagar.
7. **Rahula** – He was the only **son** of Siddhartha Gautama. He is known for his eagerness for learning.
8. **Katyayana** – He **understood Buddha's lecture the best** and was foremost in expanding on and explaining brief statements of the Buddha. Katyayana figures frequently in Mahayana texts.
9. **Upali** – He was born as a low-caste Shudra barber and later became one of the ten disciples of Buddha. Upali became known for his mastery and strictness of **Vinaya** (monastic discipline) and was consulted often about Vinaya matters.
10. **Subhuti** – He became a monk after hearing the Buddha teach at the dedication ceremony of Jetavana Monastery in Shravasti. In Theravada Buddhism, he is considered the disciple who was foremost in being **worthy of gifts**. It is said that due to his mastery of loving-kindness meditation, any gift offered to him bore the greatest merit for the donor, thus earning him the title of foremost in being **worthy of gifts**.

16 Arhats of Buddha

Arhat under Theravada Buddhism is said to be the one who has gained insights into the true nature of existence and has achieved nirvana. However, under Mahayana Buddhism, Arhat is the person who is far advanced in the path of attaining nirvana but has not attained it. In total, 16 legendary Arhats prevail under Buddhism. Nagasena (a Sarvastivadan Buddhist of 2nd century BC) and even Gautama Buddha's son Rahul are considered to be one of the 16 Arhats.

Under Mahayana, Arhat is the person who has attained peace for himself but is not willing to give it up for the sake of others. Whereas Bodhisattva under Mahayana Bodhisattva is an awakened being who vowed to be indefinitely stick in samsara for the sake of others. Therefore, Mahayana Buddhists prefer Bodhisattva as a goal rather than becoming an Arhat.

Other Prominent Personalities Associated with Buddhism

1. **Nagasena**: He answered questions about Buddhism posed by Menander I (or Milinda), the Indo-Greek king, and the conversation is recorded in the book *Milinda Panha* around 150 BC.
2. **Nagarjuna**: He lived around 150–250 AD and was the founder of the **Madhyamaka School** of Mahayana Buddhism.
3. **Vasubandhu**: A proponent of Mahayana Buddhism in the 4th–5th century AD from Gandhara and wrote from the perspectives of the Sarvastivada and Sautrantika schools.

4. **Bodhidharma:** He lived around the 5th or 6th century AD and transmitted Buddhism to China.
5. **Buddhaghosa:** A 5th-century Indian Theravada Buddhist commentator and scholar famous for his work *Visuddhimagga* (Path of Purification).
6. **Padmasambhava:** An 8th-century monk considered the 'Second Buddha' across Tibet, Nepal, Bhutan and the Himalayan states of India.
7. **Atisa:** A Buddhist **Bengali** religious leader and master, and is one of the major figures in the spread of 11th-century Mahayana and Vajrayana Buddhism in Asia. He inspired Buddhist thought from Tibet to Sumatra.
8. **Dalai Lama:** They are modern spiritual leaders of the Yellow Hat School of Tibetan Buddhism.

Royal Patrons of Buddhism

- ✿ Kings like Bimbisara, Ajatsatru, Ashoka, Milinda, Kanishka, Harsha, etc. adopted this religion.
- ✿ Lumbini Pillar Edict in Nepal, also known as the Rummimdei Pillar Inscription, gives information that sometime after the twentieth year of Ashoka's reign, he travelled to the Buddha's birthplace and personally made offerings.

His daughter Sanghamitra, and son Mahindra went to propagate Buddhism in Sri Lanka (then known as Tamraparni).

Kanishka encouraged the Gandhara school of Greco-Buddhist Art. Kanishka had been attached to the Buddhist scholar Ashvaghosha, who became his religious advisor in his later years.

Navayana Buddhism

The Navayana School is considered to be a new branch of Buddhism propounded by Dr B. R. Ambedkar. It is different from the traditionally recognised branches of Theravada, Mahayana and Vajrayana and rejects them. It discards the practices and precepts such as renouncing monks and monasticism, karma, rebirth in afterlife, samsara, meditation, enlightenment and the Four Noble Truths considered to be foundational in Buddhist traditions. It radically re-interprets Buddhism by revising the original teachings of Buddha to be about class struggle and social equality.

Buddhist Literature

Two major categories of Buddhist literature are available in India, namely, Prakrit and Pali literature and Sanskrit literature.

- ✿ **Khandhakas** – It is the second book of the Theravadin Vinaya Pitaka which consists of two sections: the Mahavagga and the Cullavagga. It includes laws on the path of life in the monastic order.
- ✿ **Mahavagga** – It is about Buddha's awakening and ten principal disciples. It has 10 chapters.
- ✿ **Cullavagga** – It is about the First and Second Buddhist Councils, the establishment of the community of bhikkhunis, and the rules for addressing offenses within the Sangha. It has 12 chapters.

- **Parivara** – It is a handbook written by a Sri Lankan monk and contains instructions on the contents of the Vinaya Pitaka.
- **Suttavibhanga** – It is also known as the Patimokkha Sutta. In Buddhism, 'Patimokkha' implies the rules of the Sangha. The '**Patimokkha**' is a set of rules governing the behaviour of Buddhist monks and nuns. It is intended to promote discipline, ethical behaviour and spiritual development among the monastic community. 'Pati' means 'towards' and 'Mokkha' means 'liberation from cyclic existence'. The Patimokkha has 227 rules for monks and 311 rules for nuns.
- **Digha Nikaya** – It is a collection of Buddhist scriptures, the first nikaya among the five Nikayas. It contains 34 long discourses. The Mahaparinibbana Sutta is the most important among all because it contains the details of Buddha's final days.
- **Majjhima Nikaya** – It is a collection of 152 suttas and has middle-sized reports on instructions.
- **Samyutta Nikaya** – It is a collection of instructions that are arranged into groups of 56 suttas.
- **Anguttara Nikaya** – It is a collection of Buddhist scriptures. It means 'Increased by One Collection'. The first chapter deals with the things that happen only once, the second chapter deals with the things that happen twice, and so on.
- **Khadduka Nikaya** – It is a collection of small pieces of scattered literary works and contains writings of various characters.



Jainism

The word 'Jain' is derived from **jina** or **jaina** which means the '**conqueror**'. They believe that their religion is comprised of people who have managed to control and conquer their desires. Jainism does not have a single founder, and instead believes that the truth comes to the world in difficult and different times by a teacher who shows the way or a **tirthankara**.

There were 23 *tirthankaras* or great-learned men in the Jain religion before Mahavira. It is commonly mistaken that **Mahavira** was the founder of Jainism, instead he was the last and 24th *tirthankara*. He achieved the goal of spirituality and taught others the right way to attain *moksha* or liberation. He was like an incarnation of god in the form of a human body and had to go thorough penance and meditation to reach the pure stage of the soul.

Jainism, like Buddhism, **rejects the authority of the Vedas**.

However, unlike Buddhism, it **believes in the existence of the soul (atman)**. The soul is the core and fundamental focus of Jain philosophy. It is the soul that experiences existence and gains knowledge, not the mind or body as both are believed to be a heap of matter.

Major Jain pilgrimages in India include the Dilwara Temple in **Mount Abu** (Rajasthan), **Palitana Temples** (Gujarat), **Girnar** (Gujarat), **Shikharji** (Jharkhand) and **Shravanabelagola** (Karnataka) (*an extensive list is provided in Chapter 1*).

The 24 tirthankaras under Jainism are:

Rishabhanatha or Adinatha, Ajita, Sambhava, Abhinandana, Sumati, Padmaprabha, Suparshva, Chandraprabha, Suvidhi, Shital, Shreyansanath, Vasupujya, Vimala, Ananta, Dharma, Shanti, Kunthu, Ara, Malli, Muni Suvrata, Nami, Nemi, Parshvanatha and **Mahavira**.



Brief History of Vardhamana Mahavira

- In around 540 BC, Prince **Vardhamana** was born at **Kundalgram** in Vaishali (in Bihar) to King Siddhartha and Queen Trishala, who ruled over the **Jnatrika** clan. At the age of 30, he went through a moving journey and left his home to live the life of an ascetic. According to Jain holy books, on the 10th day of Vaishakha, he reached the town of **Pava** near Patna where he found the truth of life, i.e., **Kevalya**, at the age of 42. He delivered his **first sermon at Pava**. A symbol was associated with every tirthankara, and Mahavira's symbol was a **lion**.
- He was given the title '**Mahavira**' or great hero. Some of the other titles given to him are **jaina** or **jitendriya**, i.e., one who conquers all his senses and **nirgrantha** or the one who is free from all bonds. He passed away at the age of 72 in 468 BC at **Pavapuri** in Bihar.



Mahavira

Disciples of Mahavira

According to Jain scriptures, Mahavira held **Samavasarana** (a preaching pavilion) to spread his knowledge among the common people. His first Samavasarana was not successful and he held a second one at the city of Pava in the garden of Mahasena. Here his words of wisdom resonated with the masses, and 11 Brahmins chose to embrace his preaching and convert to Jainism.

These 11 Brahmins were **Achalbhadra, Agnibhuti, Akampita, Indrabhuti, Mandikata, Maryadaputra, Metrarya, Prabhava, Sudharma, Vayabhuti and Vyakta**. They became his disciples or Gandhars.

Lord Mahavira imparted the Tripadi knowledge (Three pronouncements) – *Upaveiva* (Emergence), *Vigameiva* (Destruction) and *Dhuveiva* (Permanence) to his chief disciples.



Three Jain Councils

- First Jain Council**
 - ◆ **Hemchandra's Parishishtaparvan**, contains detailed information about the council. Jainism was split into two sects following the first Jain council, held around 300 BC. The

sects are Svetambara and Digambara. In this council, Mahavira's teachings got divided into twelve Angas. They are:

1. *Samavayanga*
2. *Jnatrdharmakathah*
3. *Antakrddaaasah*
4. *Vyakhyaprajnapti* or *Bhagavati sutra*
5. *Sutrakrtanga*
6. *Anuttaraupapatikadasah*
7. *Upasakadasah*
8. *Vipakasruta*
9. *Drstivada*
10. *Acaranga sutra*
11. *Prasnavyakaranani*
12. *Sthananga*

❖ It was held at **Patliputra** in the **3rd century BC** and was presided by **Sthulabhadra**.

Second Jain Council

- ❖ The second Jain council was held at two places at the same time. It took place at both Vallabhi in Gujarat, and Mathura in Uttar Pradesh. The main objective of this council was to continue the compilation of the sacred texts. It was held around 512 AD.
- ❖ **Devaradhi Kshama Ramana** was the president of the Vallabhi council.
- ❖ Final compilations of the 12 Angas and 12 Upangas were carried out.

Third Jain Council

- ❖ The Vallabhi council II is known as the Third Jain council. The monks of the Svetambara sect joined this council in Vallabhi.
- ❖ The primary objective of this council was to minimise the number of writings in religious books (Agamas).
- ❖ It was attended by more than 500 Jain acharyas.



Jain Teachings and Philosophy

Mahavira has taught the right path or *Dharma* and stressed on renunciation of the world, strict asceticism and moral cultivation. The Jains are morally bound by their religion to live in such a way that would not harm any being.

Mahavira did not believe in Vedic principles. He never believed in the existence of God. Mahavira said that the universe is a product of the natural phenomenon of cause and effect. He always believed in karma and transmigration of the soul. In the opinion of Mahavira, **the body dies but the soul remains alive**. One has to suffer for one's karma. Jainism believed in equality, but did not reject the caste system, unlike Buddhism. Starvation, nudity and self-mortification are forms of asceticism. According to Jainism, the universe functions through the interaction of living and non-living entities. The non-living entities are ether (akasa), medium of motion (dharma), medium of rest (adharma), time (kala) and matter (pudgala). Souls are not only the property of animal and plant life, but also of entities such as stones, rocks, running water, and many other natural objects not looked upon as living by other sects.

Anekantavada is the fundamental doctrine of Jainism that emphasises that the ultimate truth and reality is complex and has multiple aspects. Hence, there exists **non-absolutism**, which means that no single specific statement can describe the nature of existence and the absolute truth.

They believe that through the **three-jewel** (fold) path of right belief (**Samyak Darshana**), right knowledge (**Samyak Gyana**) and right conduct (**Samyak Charitra**), one can get rid of bad karma and also pull themselves out of the cycle of rebirth and achieve salvation. These three jewels or gems of Jainism are called **Ratnatraya**.

Jains need to follow these **five constraints** in life:

1. *Ahimsa (non-violence)*
2. *Satya (truthfulness)*
3. *Asteya (not stealing)*
4. *Aparigraha (non-acquisition)*
5. *Brahmacharya (chaste living)*

The **fifth tenet** was propounded by **Mahavira**.

Sectarian lists the following **eight auspicious symbols** (Ashtamangala) under Jainism (especially in the svetambara tradition).

Swastika	It signifies peace and well-being of humans.
Chakra	It is a large swastika with nine end points.
Simha	A throne which is said to be sanctified by the Jaina's feet.
Endless knot	A mark which is manifested on the chest of a tirthankara image and signifies his pure soul.
Padmavayu	The mirror which reflects the inner self.
Angugala	A fish couple which signifies the conquest over sexual urges.
Vardhamanaka	A shallow dish used as a lamp which shows the increase in wealth, fame and merit.
Kalasha	A pot filled with pure water signifying water.

Please Note: The symbol of a hand with a wheel on the palm symbolises **Ahimsa** in Jainism. The word ahimsa is written in the centre of the wheel.



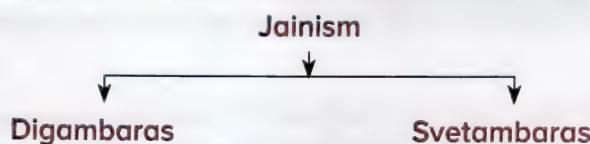
Hand with a Wheel
on the Palm

Nandavarta

It is one of the eight auspicious symbols of the **Svetambara sect** under Jainism. It is an ashtamangala which is used for worship. The **symbol has four arms with compulsory nine corners/turns**. The symbol is also associated with 18th Tirthankara Aranatha.



Two Major Schools or Sects under Jainism



Jainism has two major ancient sub-traditions:

1. **Digambaras:** Sub-sects include Mula Sangh (original community) and Terapanthi, Taranpathi and Bispanti (modern communities).
2. **Svetambaras:** Sub-sects include Sthanakavasi and Murtipujaka.

There are several other smaller sub-traditions that emerged in the 2nd millennium AD.

Digambara School

- Monks of the *Digambara* tradition **do not wear clothes** as this sect believes in complete nudity.
- Female monks wear unstitched plain white sarees and are called **Aryikas**.
- The *Digambaras* **follow all five constraints** (*Ahimsa, Satya, Asteya, Aparigraha and Brahmacharya*) as per the teachings of Mahavira, unlike the *Svetambaras*.
- Bhadrabahu** was an exponent of the *Digambara* sect and moved to Karnataka along with his disciples after predicting a long famine.
- The earliest record of *Digambara* beliefs is contained in the Prakrit ***Suttapahuda*** of Kundakunda.
- Digambara* Jains believe that **women cannot be tirthankaras** and that Malli was a man.
- Monasticism rules are **more rigid** under the *Digambara* School.

Svetambara School

- The *Svetambaras* follow the **preachings of Parshvanatha**, i.e., they believe in **only four restraints** (except Brahmacharya) to be followed to **attain Kaivalya**.
- The *Svetambaras* believe that the 23rd and 24th tirthankara did marry, unlike as thought by the *Digambara* sect.
- Sthulabhadra** was a great exponent of this school and stayed in Magadha unlike **Bhadrabahu** who went to Karnataka.

- The monks of the Svetambara School can have **simple white clothing**, a begging bowl, a brush to remove insects from their path, books and writing materials with them.
- They believe **tirthankaras can be men or women**, and say that Malli began her life as a princess.
- Svetambara tradition of Jainism **indicates five eternal substances in existence**: Soul (Jiva), Matter (Pudgala), Space (Akasha), Motion (Dharma) and Rest (Adharma), **unlike the Digambaras** which added the sixth eternal substance Time (Kala).

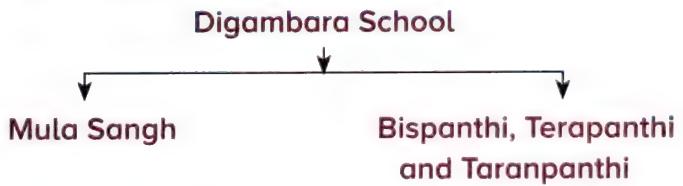
Siddhachakra, a popular yantra or a mystical diagram used for worship in Jainism. It is termed as *Navapada* in the Svetambara tradition and *Navadevta* in the Digambara tradition.



Sub-sects under Digambara and Svetambara Schools

Digambara School

It has two major sub-sects:



- Mula Sangh**: the original community
- Bispanthi, Terapanthi and Taranpanthi**: the modern community

Terapanthi vs Bispanthi

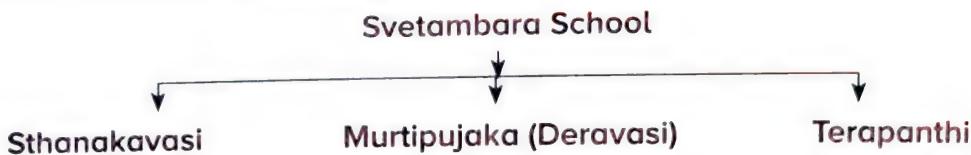
Digambara Terapanthis worship the idols with ashta-dravya just like the Bispanthis, **but replace flowers and fruits with dry substitutes**.

The Bispanthis worship **tirthankaras as well as Yaksha and Yakshini** like Bhairava and Kshetrapala. Their religious practices include aarti and offerings of flowers, fruits and prasad. **Bhattarakas are their dharma-gurus** and are concentrated in **Rajasthan and Gujarat**.

On the other hand, the Digambara **Terapanthi sect opposes Bhattarakas and worship only tirthankaras**.

Svetambara School

Its three sub-sects include the following:



1. **Sthanakavasi:** They believe in **praying to saints rather than to an idol** in a temple. The saints **wear a muhapatti** near their mouth to cover it unlike Murtipujakas.
2. **Murtipujaka (Deravasi):** They **keep idols of the tirthankaras at their temples** and worship them and the saints **do not wear a muhapatti**.
3. **Terapanthi:** They pray to saints rather than to an idol in a temple, like Sthanakavasi. Terapanthi saints also wear a muhapatti near their mouth to cover it.

Some Major Royal Patrons of Jainism

Some major royal patrons of Jainism are Bimbisara, Ajatasatru, Chandragupta Maurya, Bindusara, Harshavardhana, Kharavela from North India and Kadamba dynasty, Ganga dynasty, Amoghavarsha, and Kumarapala (Chalukya dynasty) from South India.

Some Important Jain Acharyas

Some **important Jain Acharyas** are:

- Acharya Gyansagar, Acharya Samantabhadra (*author of The Ratnakarand Shravakachar, Apta-mimamsa, Svayambhustotra*), Akalanka, Nemichandra Siddhant Chakravarti (*author of Gommatsara*), Yativishabha (*author of Tiloya Panatti Prabhacandra*), Virasena, Pujiyapada, Aparajita, Aryanandi, Ganeshprasad Varni, Jambuvijaya, Kumudendu Manatunga (*composer of Bhaktamara Stotra*) Shantisagar, Adikavi Pampa (*poet, one of the 'three gems of Kannada literature'*) among **Digambara ascetics**.
- Somadeva Suri, Vallabhsuri Mahopadhyaya Yasovijayaji, Ram Chandra Suri, Anand Rishiji Maharaj, Sthulabhadra, Bhikshu (*Creator of Terapanthi sect of Jainism*), Vijayanandsuri, Haribhadra, Hemachandra, Hiravijaya, Acharya Vijay Vallabh Suri, Acharya Vimalasagar among **Svetambara ascetics**.

Popular Practices Under Jainism

- **Sallekhana** – It is a religious practice of **voluntarily fasting to death** by gradually reducing the intake of food and liquids. It is **not considered as a suicide by Jain scholars** because it is not an act of passion, nor does it deploy poisons or weapons. It can be performed by both Jain ascetics and householders.

In 2015, the Rajasthan High Court banned the practice, considering it suicide. Later that year, the Supreme Court of India stayed the decision of the Rajasthan High Court and lifted the ban on *Sallekhana*.

- **Pratikramana** – It is a process during which **Jains repent for their sins in their daily life**, and remind themselves not to repeat them. The five types of Pratikramana include Devasi, Rayi, Pakhi, Chaumasi and Samvatsari.

Jain Flag

The Jain flag has five colours, namely **red, yellow, white, green and dark blue**. These five colours represent the Pancha Paramesthi, i.e., the fivefold hierarchy of religious authorities under Jainism. All 24 tirthankaras are associated with one of the colours.



White	Represents Arihant (one who has attained Kevalagyan)
Red	Represents Siddha (soul that has attained salvation and truth)
Yellow	Represents Acharya (Master of Adepts)
Green	Represents Upadhyay (those who teach scriptures to monks)
Dark blue	Represents Sadhu (monks)

Swastika in the middle of the flag represents the **embodiment of the soul in either of four forms: in deities, in human beings, in animal/birds/insects/plants and in beings from hell**. The escalation or degradation of the soul among these four forms depends on Karma. The purpose of the soul is to be liberated from these four forms/stages and become an Arihant or Siddha eventually.

The **three dots above the Swastika** represent the **Ratnatraya** (or three jewels) of Jainism, i.e., *Right Faith, Right Knowledge and Right Conduct*.

The **curve above the three dots** denotes **Siddhashila**, i.e., an eternal place situated at the top of the Universe where Arihants and Siddhas reside.



Buddhism and Jainism: A Brief Comparison

Similarities

- Both **reject the authority of the Vedas**, but emphasise renunciation and human effort as the means of obtaining salvation and both established a monastic order for both men and women.

- Both were **inspired by the philosophy of the Upanishads**, i.e., the ultimate goal of life is salvation.

Differences

- Jainism **recognises** the **existence of god** while Buddhism does not.
- Jainism does **not condemn** the Varna system while Buddhism does.
- Jainism believes in the **transmigration of the soul, i.e., reincarnation**, while Buddhism does not, and rejects the concept of the existence of the Soul (atman).
- Buddhism prescribes a **middle path** while Jainism advocates its followers to live a life of complete austerity.

CHAPTER SUMMARY

- Buddhism** – originated from the Indian sub-continent – spread to large parts of South-east Asia – Buddhism is attached to the story of Siddhartha who came to be known as Buddha – world's fourth largest religion.
- Gautama Buddha** – born at Lumbini – in 563 BC – on the auspicious day of Vaishakha Purnima – married to Princess Yashodhara – had an only son named Rahul.
- At the age of 35 on the same day of his birth, he attained enlightenment (Nirvana) under a pipal tree** – gave his first sermon to his five companions at the Deer Park in Sarnath near Varanasi – the event was called Dharmachakra-Pravartana.
- Three jewels (triratna) of Buddhism:** Buddha (the enlightened one) – Dhamma (teachings of Buddha) – Sangha (monastic order).
- Buddha attained Mahaparinirvana at Kushinagar** – at the age of 80 – in around 483 BC.
- Four major noble truths under Buddhism:** The truth of the origin of suffering (Samudaya) – The truth of suffering (Duhkha) – The truth of the cessation of suffering (Nirodha) – The truth of the path to the cessation of suffering (Marga).
- Buddhism rejects the authenticity of the Vedas** – rejects the concept of existence of the Soul.
- Four major schools developed under Buddhism** – Hinayana – Mahayana – Theravada – Vajrayana.
- Hinayana** – lesser vehicle – original preaching of the Buddha – did not believe in idol or image worship – attain *individual salvation* – ultimate aim is Nirvana – used the Pali language to interact with the masses – Emperor Ashoka patronised the Hinayana sect.
- Mahayana** – greater vehicle – liberal and believes in the heavenliness of Buddha and bodhisattvas – embodying Buddha-nature – believe in idol or image worship of Buddha – Mahayana texts include the Lotus Sutra, and Mahavamsa – has two sub-schools Madhyamaka and Yogacara.
- Jainism** – The word Jain is derived from *jina* or *jaina* – means the 'Conqueror' – believes that the truth comes to the world in difficult and different times by a teacher who shows the way or a *tirthankara* – rejects the authority of the Vedas – believes in the existence of the soul (atman).
- Prince Vardhamana** – born at Kundalgram in Vaishali – in around 540 BC – he was given the title 'Mahavira' – attained kaivalya at the age of 42.

- ❖ **Jains believe in the three-jewel (Ratnatraya) path:** right belief (Samyakdarshana) – right knowledge (Samyakgyana) – right conduct (Samyakcharitra).
- ❖ **Jains follow five constraints in life:** Ahimsa (non-violence) – Satya (truthfulness) – Asteya (not stealing) – Aparigraha (non-acquisition) – Brahmacharya (chaste living).
- ❖ **Digambaras** – believe in complete nudity – follow all the five constraints – Bhadrabahu was an exponent of Digambara – believe that women cannot be tirthankaras – two major sub-sects – Mula Sangh (original community) and Bispanthi, Terapanthi and Taranapanthi (modern community).
- ❖ **Svetambaras** – follow the preaching of Parshvanatha – wear simple white clothing – believe that tirthankaras can be men or women – indicates five eternal substances in existence: Soul (Jiva) – Matter (Pudgala) – Space (Akasha) – Motion (Dharma) – Rest (Adharma).

श्री-स्त्राप०

अ-स्वप्न
हृकरिणा अक्षवानादाय । इक्षिए जान्वालै स्वर्गोन्नादाया भाष्यम् अस्त्रमित्र
हास्तकर्मणि लोमहंहणे । इति प्रतिवेषनं । यस्तत्रै इति दक्षं ।
इस्तविष्टु । इत्यल्लग्नं धन्मसपयं या मित्रप्रस्तावना सपर्याप्ति । इत्यग्ने
पुष्पाणि वाऽऽ । इत्यल्लग्ना च नं प्रीयते । कुंडलमुद्दिकलामान्ना दित्यम्
स्वरूपाय नमन् यद्यक्ष्यते तप्रवान् । जोन्नाय यज्ञमुक्तव्यपर्येवप्स्याय विषु
यवाद् स्वयाय उत्तमहंहेत्र । इत्यल्लग्नाहुयात् । यथावृत्तमुर्वोत्तमाय व
उद्दीता । सोऽपि तामह । तथात्तममयं ज्ञेयस्त्रियान्नदक्षित्तम् । इत्यग्नेविष्टु
अस्त्रमित्रकर्मणि लोकताकृतावस्थक्ते तन्नामहंहणे । इत्याप्तिः ।
इत्यस्त्रवैतत्त्याय पारावनेजनं । पादप्रस्तावना एव वृद्धः । इत्यस्त्र
वैत्यनमुष्यं । कुंडलमुद्दिकर्त्त्यमहंहेत्रप्रददा । यजमानव्रातम् ।

त्राणक्षालनमविरपिष्ठता । पश्चाद्वप्तप्रस्तातन । आवप्त्यागात्
मायप्त्य । आयातुव इत्प्राद्यपत्तराण्यदेव प्राप्तिवतामांस्तिका
ल । अत्राद्यति० अस्मिन्देशमर्मणे व्रतानामलादिनोचरण्या
प्रमहेण व्रतान्नामास्त्रणे त्राप्तप्रस्तातन । ह० अवन्नताहात्याकृद्रप
द्वितीयातिंच्च । अत्राद्यवहारार्थद्वयार्वतिविधिः परिहारामर्मण
अस्तुद्वयामायप्राप्तिः प्रतिदिनमविश्वानीजनप्रमहस्यप्त्य० ह० क
प्रतिदिवसामायप्राप्तिः प्रतिदिनमविश्वानीजनप्रमहस्यप्त्य० ह० क
त्राणक्षालनमविरपिष्ठता । अस्तु व्रतान्नामास्त्रणे विधिः परिह
रामाविवित्तेष्वाप्तिः प्रतिदिनमविश्वानीजनप्रमहस्यप्त्य० ह० क
प्रतिदिनमविश्वानीजनप्रमहस्यप्त्य० ह० क

CHAPTER 20

INDIAN LITERATURE



Introduction

The word 'literature' has been derived from the Latin *litteratura*, which means 'writing formed with letters'. It refers to any form of writing that has some literary merit. It is classified broadly into **fiction** and **non-fiction**. Further classifications are made between poetry and prose. Within these broad categories, distinctions can be made between novels, short stories, drama, novella and so forth. Some of the most popular literature from Greco-Roman times has been epics, which were transmitted orally and later compiled in the written form with the development of complex languages.

The distribution and dissemination of language took a major step ahead in the 18th century with the development of print technology, which led more and more people to read and appreciate literature. Currently, electronic literature has taken centre stage and far more people read through this medium.



Difference between Didactic and Narrative Text

Points of Difference	Didactic	Narrative
Type of text	This is also known as directive text as it tries to influence the reasoning, thinking and conduct of the reader.	This text provides all the essential information about the topic so that whatever is discussed in the narration is explained or makes sense to the reader.
Objectives	The writer intends to persuade, coax and compel the reader into thinking in a particular way.	The writer intends to enhance and sustain the interest and inquisitiveness of readers in the topic.
Commonly used for	It is usually used for writing about political or moral issues , specifically in sermons and religious treatises.	It is the most common type of prose and is used mostly in story writing and novels .

In India, four major speech groups exist, i.e., the Austric, Dravidian, Sino-Tibetan and Indo-European. The following discussion focuses on the literature of Sanskrit, the oldest Indo-European language of the Indian subcontinent.



Literature in Ancient India

- ✿ Ancient Indian literature defines the common perception that it was confined to sacred texts such as the Vedas and the Upanishads. There is a lot of literature in Prakrit, which is full of realism and moral values without any religious connotations being attached to it.
- ✿ The most popular set of works from the ancient period are the Vedas, which are sacred texts used in religious rituals as well as in daily situations.
- ✿ But several epics and numerous lyrical works were composed in the major languages of the ancient period, such as Sanskrit, Prakrit, Pali and Ardhamagadhi, which will also be discussed later.
- ✿ The Vedic literature is broadly divided into two categories known as **Shruti** and **Smriti**. Shruti comprises of the sacred texts of Hinduism viz. **Vedas, Brahmanas, Aranyakas** and **Upanishads**. **Smriti** (meaning 'that which is remembered') is the collection of post-Vedic Classical Sanskrit literature. It comprises of **Vedanga, Smritis, Dharmashastras, Shad darshana, Puranas, Itihasa, Upavedas** and **Mahakavyas**.



Vedas

- ✿ Veda is derived from the root 'vid', which means 'to know'. The word 'Veda' signifies knowledge, and the texts are actually about providing mankind **knowledge to conduct** their entire life

on earth and beyond. Veda is also believed to be **Apaurusheya**, which means **not a creation of human**.

- ✿ The Vedas are written in highly stylised poetic form and the language is **full of symbols** and **myths**.
- ✿ The Vedas were initially handed down orally by generations of Brahmin families, but it is estimated by historians that they were compiled around **1500-1000 BC**.
- ✿ In the Hindu tradition, they are considered sacred because they are the divine revelations, which were revealed by the Gods to guide mankind eternally. They also have larger implications on our lives as they treat the universe and its inhabitants as one big family and preach **Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam**.
- ✿ There are **four major Vedas**: the **Rig Veda**, **Yajur Veda**, **Sama Veda** and **Atharva Veda**.
- ✿ These were mostly written by Vedic seers and poets called rishis who envisioned the cosmic mysteries and wrote them in the form of Sanskrit poetry.
- ✿ All the Vedas or Samhitas give prominence to **yagna** (sacrifice).
- ✿ The *Brahmanas*, the *Upanishads* and the *Aranyakas* accompany each Veda.

Rig Veda

The *Rig Veda* is the **oldest** existing Veda amongst the four. It consists of 1028 individual Sanskrit hymns.

It is said to be one of the first extensive compositions in an Indo-European language to have survived for our perusal. Historians argue that it was compiled around **1500-1200 BC**.

- ✿ The focus of this Veda is on **worldly prosperity** and **natural beauty**.
- ✿ The text is organised in 10 books, known as **Mandalas**, of varying age and length. Furthermore, each mandala comprises several **Suktas** or hymns, which are usually for sacrificial purposes.
- ✿ Most of the hymns concentrate on the themes of life, death, creation, and sacrifice and for seeking godly pleasure or **soma**.
- ✿ All the Rig Vedic hymns are dedicated to several deities, in particular to their **chief deity**, **Lord Indra**.
- ✿ The other prominent Gods mentioned in the *Rig Veda* are **Agni** (God of fire), **Varuna** (God of water), **Rudra** (God of wind/storm), **Aditya** (a form of the Sun God), **Vayu** (God of air) and the **Ashwini** twins. There are several hymns dedicated to female Goddesses too, such as **Usha** (Goddess of dawn), **Prithvi** (Goddess of earth) and **Vak** (Goddess of speech).
- ✿ The hymns of the *Rig Veda* were recited by Hotri sages.

- Below is a brief on the 10 mandalas:

Mandala	Hymns	Age and Length	Detail
Mandala I	191	Youngest and longest	Mainly addressed to Agni and Indra, Varuna, Mitra, the Ashvins, etc.
Mandala II	43	Oldest and shortest	Mainly addressed to Agni and Indra. It is chiefly attributed to Rishi Gr̥tsamada Saunohotra
Mandala III	62	Oldest and shortest	Mainly addressed to Agni and Indra and the Visvedevas. Contains the Gayatri Mantra
Mandala IV	58	Oldest and shortest	Mainly addressed to Agni and Indra, as well as the Rhubs, Ashvins, Br̥haspati, Vayu, Usas, etc. Most hymns are attributed to Vamadeva Gautama.
Mandala V	87	Oldest and shortest	Mainly addressed to Agni, Indra, Visvedevas, the Maruts, the twin-deity Mitra-Varuna and the Asvins. Most hymns are attributed to the Atri clan
Mandala VI	75	Oldest and shortest	Mainly addressed to Agni and Indra, all the Gods, Pusan, Ashvin, Usas, etc.
Mandala VII	104	Oldest and shortest	Addressed to Agni, Indra, Visvadevas, Maruts, Mitra-Varuna, Asvins, Ushas, Indra-Varuna, Varuna, Vayu, two each to Saraswati (ancient river/goddess of learning) and Vishnu. Most hymns of this Mandala are attributed to Vasistha Maitravaruni.
Mandala VIII	103	Mixed ages	Attributed to the Kāṇva clan and to other (Angirasa) poets
Mandala IX	114	Mixed ages	Entirely devoted to Soma Pavamana , the cleansing of the sacred potion of the Vedic religion
Mandala X	191	Youngest and largest	Addressed to Agni, Indra and various other deities. Contains Nadistuti Sukta (praise of rivers), Purush Sukta (Vedic sociology), Nasadiya Sukta (multiple speculations about the creation of the universe), Surya Sukta (marriage hymns), death hymns , etc.
Total	1028		

Note: Six Mandalas ranging from 2nd to 7th are called Gotra or Vamsa Mandalas, also collectively known as **Kula Grantha**.

Yajur Veda

- The name 'Yajus' signifies 'sacrifice', and this Veda concentrates on the **rites and mantras** of the different types of **sacrifices** that were prevalent in the Vedic times.
- There are two major recensions (**samhita**) of the Yajur Veda: Shukla (white/pure) and Krishna (black/dark). Here, *black* implies an unarranged and motley collection of verses in contrast to the arranged verses in the white. These samhitas are also called **Vajasaneyi** Samhita and **Taittiriya** Samhita.
- The Yajur Veda is predominantly a **ritual Veda** as it acts like a guidebook for the rishis/priests who conduct **sacrificial rituals**.
- The Yajur Veda seems to know the metal **iron**.

Sama Veda

- The Sama Veda has been named after 'Saman' (melody), and it concentrates on **melody or songs**.

- While the entire text has 1875 hymns, historians argue that 75 are original and the rest have been taken from the Sakala branch of the *Rig Veda*.
- It consists of hymns, detached verses and 16, 000 ragas (musical notes) and raginis. It is because of the lyrical nature of the text that it has also been called the '**book of chants**'. It also shows us how **Indian music** had developed in the Vedic period. The hymns of the *Sama Veda* were recited by Udgatri sages.
- The *Rig Veda*, *Sama Veda* and *Yajur Veda* are collectively known as *Traji* or *Trayi Vidya* (meaning Triple Science).

Atharva Veda

- This *Veda* is also known as the **Brahma Veda** and has been attributed to two *rishis* called **Atharvan** and **Angiras**. Because of its association with the two *rishis*, in the olden times, it was also called **Atharvanga**.
- While it is mostly concerned with the **peace** and **prosperity** of human society and covers all aspects of a **man's daily life**, it specifically focuses on the **treatment of several ailments**. The book is known to prescribe treatment for almost 99 diseases.
- There are two major recensions (*sakhas*) of the text called the **Paippalada** and **Saunakiya**.
- Most of the text deals with healing and **black and white magic** (*Atharvaveda* is also known as the book of magical formula), and speculation on the **changes in the universe**, and the text even touches upon issues such as the **everyday problems** in a householder's life.

To fully understand the *Vedas*, it is necessary to read the **Vedangas** or the branches/limbs of the *Veda*. There are six such auxiliary disciplines associated with the study of the *Vedas*. They act as a supplement to the original *Veda* and concentrate on topics such as **siksha (education)**, **nirukta** (etymology or the origin of words), **chhanda** (metrics in Sanskrit grammar), **Kalpasutra** (sacrificial practice and systematic sutras), **jyotisha** (astronomy) and **vyakarana** (grammar). In the later period, several authors picked these subjects and wrote treatises on them, called **Sutra**. These were written in the form of a precept or a text that defines the general rule that regulates the thoughts and behaviour of mankind. One of the most striking examples of such literature is **Panini's Ashtadhyayi**, which is a text to define the rules of **Sanskrit grammar**.

Brahmanas

- The *Brahmanas* are part of the Hindu **sruti** (revealed knowledge) literature. Each *Veda* has a *Brahmana* attached to it, which is essentially a collection of texts with **commentaries** on the particular *Veda*. They are usually a mixture of legends, facts, philosophy and detailed explanations of Vedic rituals.
- They also contain **instructions** on how to properly conduct rituals and enunciate the science of sacrifice. They also **explain the symbolic significance** of the sacred words used in the rituals.

- Although historians disagree on the dating of the Brahmanas, it is usually pegged to be composed and compiled between 900 and 700 BC. As mentioned above, **each Veda has its accompanying Brahmana** as presented below:

Rig Veda	Aitareya Brahmana	Kaushitaki Brahmana
Sama Veda	Tandya Mahabrahmana	Shadvimsha Brahmana
Yajur Veda	Taittiriya Brahmana	Shatapatha Brahmana
Atharva Veda	Gopatha Brahmana	



Upanishads

- Interestingly, the term Upanishad or **u** (at), **pa** (foot), **ni** (down) and **s(h)ad** (to sit), i.e., **to sit down near** (the teacher), describes the text completely.
- A collection of more than 200 Upanishads are known, and the teacher usually passed them down verbally to his students in the forest while they sat in front of him. This tradition was part of the **guru-shishya parampara**.
- These are treatises written in **Sanskrit** and give an account of the Vedas in predominantly monastic and mystical terms. As they are generally the **last part of the Vedas**, they are also known as **Vedanta** or 'end (anta) of the Veda'.
- The Upanishads are said to hold the '**truth**' about human life and show the way towards human salvation or **moksha**. They continue to talk about the *abstract* and *philosophical problems* faced by mankind, especially the origin of this universe, the supposed origin of mankind, the life and death cycle, and the material and spiritual quests of man.
- Out of the above-mentioned 200 Upanishads, a set of **108 Upanishads** has been called the **Muktika** Canon. Only 10 of these are the principal Upanishads, *viz. Isha, Kena, Katha, Prashan, Mundaka, Mandukya, Tattiriya, Aitareya, Chandogya and Brihadaranyaka*. This is supposed to be an important canon as the number 108 is equivalent to the number of beads on a Hindu rosary or *mala*.
- The oldest Upanishads are **Brihadaranyaka** and **Chandogya** Upanishads.

The phrase **Satyameva Jayate**, which is the national motto of India, is taken from Mundaka Upanishad. The teachings propounded in the Upanishads have been a part of the founding rituals of Hinduism. They are the foundation of the Hindu philosophical thought. The central idea of the Upanishads is the connection between the existence of humans and the cosmic realities.



Aranyakas

- The **Aranyakas** are also texts attached to the Vedas, and they describe the philosophy behind the **rituals** and **sacrifices** involved in the Vedas from various perspectives. They are said to be compilations of ritualistic information on the birth and death cycles as well as the complexity of the soul.
- It is argued that holy and learned men, called **Munis**, who preferred to dwell within the limits of the **forests**, taught them.

- Similar to the Brahmanas, each Veda also has an accompanying *Aranyaka*.
- The Aranyakas bridge the way of work (Karma Marga) postulated by the Brahmanas and the way of knowledge (Gyan Marga) advocated by the Upanishads.

The Epics: the *Mahabharata* and the *Ramayana*

These two great Sanskrit epics are also called **mahakavya** as they have become a part of the collective memory of the followers of Hinduism. Both the texts have been compiled and added to through the ages, and what we see today is an amalgamation of several transmissions made by sages as well as bards or storytellers.

Ramayana

- The most famous and revered recension of the *Ramayana* is by the sage **Valmiki**, who is also called as **Adikavi** or the 'first amongst the poets'. By the same logic, the *Ramayana* is called **Adikavya** or the 'first amongst the poetry'.
- Although there is great debate on the dating of the *Ramayana*, most historians argue that it was first compiled around 1500 BC.
- In this epic, through the story of Rama, who is projected as the ideal man, instructions on how to achieve the *fourfold objectives* (**Purushartha**) of mankind are given:

Dharma	Religion or righteousness
Artha	(monetary) Achievements in the worldly sphere
Kama	Fulfilling worldly desires
Moksha	Liberation from these desires

- The *Ramayana* consists of 24, 000 verses and is divided into seven books called **Khandas**.
- It is considered an epic as it presents the details of the war between Lord Rama and Demon King Ravana over the kidnapping of Rama's wife, Sita. There are several major characters like Hanuman, Lakshmana, and Vibhishana, who were instrumental in the fight that was fought in Lanka (modern Sri Lanka), at the end of which Rama triumphed over Ravana and brought back his wife. This success has been considered to be the **victory of good over evil**.
- There are many versions of the *Ramayana* in several Indian languages. '**Ram Charita Manas**' written by saint **Tulasi Das** in 1576 AD is one such adaptation.
- The influence of the characters in the *Ramayana* is found in the cultural consciousness of several South-East Asian countries like Cambodia, Thailand and Indonesia.

Mahabharata

- The *Mahabharata* has several versions, but the most popular one was penned by **Ved Vyasa**.

- It was written in **Sanskrit** and initially had 8800 verses. This version was called '**Jaya**' or the story of 'victory'.
- After that, several stories were compiled and added to this collection. The number of verses increased to 24, 000, and it was renamed '**Bharata**', after the earliest Vedic tribes.
- The current form consists of **1, 00, 000 verses** (the final shape was formed during the Gupta period of early 4th century AD) and is divided into 18 **parvas** (chapters). It is the longest epic ever written.
- The story is based on the conflict between the **Kauravas** and the **Pandavas** over the right to claim the throne of Hastinapur. The **sutradhar** of the story is Lord Krishna.
- The *Mahabharata* also consists of an important didactical text of the Hindus, i.e., the **Bhagwata Gita**. This text is like a concise guide to the Hindu religion's philosophical dilemmas and even acts as a guide to mankind on how to live a righteous life. Most of the text is a dialogue between Lord Krishna and Pandava Prince Arjuna about the duties of a man, warrior and prince.
- The text also elaborates on the problem of violence versus non-violence and action versus non-action, and in the end, talks about **dharma**. Lord Krishna even makes a distinction between the various kinds of *dharma* and prefers that Arjuna and mankind should follow **Nishkama Karma**, i.e., the performance of one's duty to the family and the world in a selfless manner.
- In Indian tradition, *Mahabharata* is also known as the fifth Veda.

Puranas

- As the word '**Purana**' suggests, these texts talk about 'that which renews the old'.
- These are ancient Indian mythological texts, which consist of narrative stories about the **creation of the universe** and illustrate its history till the supposed **destruction** of the universe. They cover a wide range of subjects like folk tales, pilgrimages, astronomy, grammar and theology.
- It contains the stories of the kings, heroes, sages and demigods, but it focuses on the divine Hindu **trimurti** or trinity/three Gods: Brahma, Vishnu and Mahesh.
- There are 18 major *Puranas* (**Mahapuranas**), and each gives prominence to a particular deity and expounds on the philosophical and religious concepts related to that deity.
- Some of the more prominent and well-known *Puranas* are **Bhagavata, Brahma, Vayu, Agni, Garuda, Padma, Vishnu and Matsya**. These contain anecdotes about the social, cultural and religious life of post-Vedic India and provide historians with critical information about geography, history and dynastic genealogies. The **Skanda Purana** is the longest and the **Markandeya Purana** is the shortest Purana.
- These *Puranas* are written in the form of **stories**, which combine myths, legends and sermons about the deities. This **easy form** of story writing made it very popular amongst the masses, who did not always understand the complex Vedas.
- The *Puranas* were translated and distributed in various vernacular languages. They use parables and fables to spread their message:

Parables vs Fables

Parables	Fables
<p>Short stories that in prose or verse illustrate a spiritual, moral or religious lesson.</p> <p>They usually feature a human character.</p>	<p>Short stories that in prose or verse illustrate a 'moral' through a pithy maxim or clever story.</p> <p>They usually feature animals, inanimate objects, mythical creatures and plants that are given human-like qualities.</p>

- All of us have at some point of time heard a story from the **Panchatantra** text by **Vishnu Sharma**. This didactic fable comprises several stories with morals and knowledge about the world through animals. It is an ancient non-religious text on interrelated animal fables in Sanskrit and believed to be dated around 200 BC–300 AD. The text deals with human conduct or particularly the wise conduct of life.
- Another well-known work of the same genre is **Hitopadesha**, believed to be written by **Narayan Pandit** around the 12th century. This also has several human and animal elements imparting worldly wisdom and advice on political affairs.

Upavedas

In Hinduism, the term upaveda (meaning applied knowledge) refers to traditional literature related to some technical subjects. The Upavedas are as follows:

1. **Dhanurveda** – It refers to the science of warfare and is associated with the Yajurveda.
2. **Gandharvaveda** – It deals with various aspects of aesthetics including art-forms like music, dance, poetry, sculpture, erotica, etc. It is associated with the Samaveda.
3. **Ayurveda** – It is the science of health and life and is associated with Atharvaveda.
4. **Arthashastra** – It deals with public administration, governance, economy and polity. It is associated with the Atharvaveda.
5. **Sthapatyaveda** – It is considered as the fifth Upaveda, which relates to engineering and architecture. It is also associated with the Yajur Veda.

Upapuranas

The *Puranas* were so popular with the masses that they gave rise to another sub-genre called **Upapuranas** or minor *Puranas*. There are about 19 minor *Puranas*, and they are based on five major subjects as dictated by the Sanskrit lexicographer from the Gupta period, **Amarasimha**:

Sarga	The creation of the universe
Pratisarga	The periodic cycle of destruction and re-creation
Manvantara	The periods of Manu's lifetime
Vamsa (Chandra and Surya)	Genealogies of solar and lunar dynasties of Gods and sages
Vamshanucharita	Dynastic histories of kings

Dharmashastra

It is a collection of ancient Sanskrit texts that contain **codes of conduct and moral principles (dharma) for Hindus**. There are estimated to be between 18 and 100 texts among the collection of *Dharmashastra*. It is believed that these originated in the *Dharmasutra* texts, which emerged during the Vedic era. The *Dharmashastra* offers commentaries on responsibilities, duties and ethics for an individual's behaviour towards oneself, one's family and one's community. The *Dharmashastra* texts were written in **poetic verses**. While the *Dharmasutra* texts are based upon *Vedas*, *Dharmashastra* texts are mainly based on *Puranas*. The main texts that comprise the *Dharmashastra* include the following:

1. ***Manusmriti*** (from about the 2nd to 3rd century AD) – **most often studied** – has particular influence on medieval Buddhism and Hinduism in Cambodia and Indonesia. ***Manusmriti*** lays down some of the important legal and social norms prevalent in Indian society. In the context of distribution of wealth and properties of a person, the paternal estate was to be divided equally amongst sons after the death of the parents. Women could not claim a share of these resources. ***Stridhana*** (literally meaning 'a woman's wealth') were the gifts they received on the occasion of their marriage by a woman. Women were allowed to retain this ***Stridhana***. This could be inherited by their children without any claim of the husband on this property. These norms about access to property and wealth caused various social differences between men and women.
2. ***Yajnavalkya Smriti*** (from about the 4th to 5th century AD) – considered the **best crafted text** of the *Dharmashastra* tradition.
3. ***Naradasmriti*** (from about the 5th to 6th century AD) – **juridical text** as opposed to a text about righteous conduct.
4. ***Visnusmriti*** (from about 7th century AD) – details the **bhakti tradition** rather than dharma directly.

The *Dharmashastras* attracted secondary works called commentaries (**Bhasyas**) and digests (**Nibandhas**).

Bhasyas

They typically interpret and explain the *Dharmashastra*, accept or reject the ideas along with reasons why. Prominent *Bhasya* authors related to *manusmriti* were **Bharuci**, **Medhatithi**, etc.

Nibandhas

The need for *Nibandhas* arose primarily because of the conflict and disagreements on a particular subject across the various *Dharma* texts. They attempted to reconcile, bridge or suggest a compromise guideline to the numerous disagreements in the primary *Dharma* texts.

The **oldest surviving** Nibandha is Krityakalpataru, from early 12th century, by Lakshmidhara of Kannauj in present Uttar Pradesh.

Other notable authors of Nibandhas include Jimutavahana and Raghunandana (*wrote on inheritance*), Nanda-paṇḍita (*wrote on adoption*), Toḍar Mal (*wrote on king's duties*), Cañḍesvara, Kamalakara-bhatta, Nilakanṭha and Mitra-misra (*they all wrote on judicial process*).

A few notable Nibandhas were written **by women**. These include Lakshmidevi's *Vivadachandra* and Mahadevi Dhiramati's *Danavakyavali*.



Classical Sanskrit Literature

The period of Classical Sanskrit Literature in India is from the 4th century AD to the 12th century AD. Most of the literature in Sanskrit has been divided into the **Vedic** and the **Classical** categories.

The two epics – *Mahabharata* and *Ramayana* – are also part of the classical category but are discussed separately because of their religious importance. Irrespective of their centrality to the Hindu religion, these epics can also be considered to be the precursors of Sanskrit *kavya* (epic poetry), *nataka* (classical drama) and other treatises on medicine, statecraft, grammar, astronomy, mathematics and so forth.

Most of the Sanskrit literature is bound by the rules of grammar explained brilliantly in **Panini's Ashtadhyayi**, a treatise on the rigid rules which bind the Sanskrit language. Two other most famous works on Sanskrit grammar of ancient India are **Mahabhashya** (meaning 'great commentary'), by Patanjali (250 BC) and **Varttika-sutra** by Katyayana. At present Katyayana's work (which consisted of 1500 verses on Pañini known as **Varttikas on the Sutras of Pāṇini**) is available only through references in Patanjali's work.

Yoga Vasistha Samhita

Popularly known as **Maha-Ramayana**, Arsha Ramayana and Vasiṣṭha Ramayana, it is a historically popular and influential philosophical text of Hinduism, dated around 7th-15th century AD. The complete text contains around 29,000 verses and is named after sage Vasistha who is mentioned and revered in the seventh book of Rigveda. The text is structured as a **discourse of sage Vasistha to Prince Rama** and consists of following six books.

- Book 1: Vairagya-prakaranam – Rama frustrated with the nature of life, human suffering and disdain for the world.

- Book 2: Mumukshuvayahara-prakaranam – describes the desire for liberation, the nature of those who seek liberation, and need for self-effort in all spiritual pursuits.
- Book 3: Utpatti-prakaranam – describes the birth of all creation as well as the birth of spiritual side of Rama.
- Book 4: Stithi-prakaranam – describes the nature of world and many non-dualism ideas with numerous stories.
- Book 5: Upashama-prakaranam – discusses meditation to dissolution of false dualism, to feel oneness and its powers in liberating the individual.
- Book 6: titled Nirvana-prakaranam – describes the state of an enlightened and blissful Rama. It also discusses Yoga.

The philosophical foundation of the text is similar to **Advaita Vedanta** which is particularly associated with drsti-srsti sub-school of Advaita which holds that the “whole world of things is the object of mind”.

Yoga Vasistha was translated many a times in the later period considering its importance.

Sanskrit Drama

- One of the most popular genres of lyric poetry and prose is the popular romantic tales, whose sole purpose was to offer diversion or entertainment (*Lokaranjana*) to the public.
- These were usually written in the form of elaborate dramas with distinct stories and plots, yet they gave a unique perspective on life.
- The rules regarding performance, acting, gestures, stage direction and acting have been illustrated in the **Natyasastra** by **Bharata**. Major dramas written during the ancient period are mentioned in the Theatre chapter.
- **Sudraka** composed a ten-act Sanskrit drama ***Mrichchhakatika*** (The Little Clay Cart) around the 5th century CE (where a young Brahmin Charudatta falls in love with a wealthy courtesan Vasantasena). Other plays attributed to Sudraka are ***Vinavasavadatta*** and ***Padmaprabhritaka***.
- ***Mudrarakshasa*** (*The Signet of the Minister*), a Sanskrit-language drama about the ascension of King Chandragupta Maurya, and ***Devi-Chandraguptam***, are written by **Vishakhadatta**.
- ***Uttararamacarita*** (story of Rama's later life from Rama's coronation after his return from exile till reunion of Rama with Sita) is another Sanskrit classical drama by **Bhavabhuti**.
- **Bhasa** is one of the earliest and most celebrated Indian playwrights in Sanskrit, predating Kalidasa. ***Svapnavasavadattam*** (*The Dream of Vasavadatta*) is a Sanskrit play written by him. The complete text of the *Svapnavasavadattam* was lost for a long time until it was discovered by Indian scholar **T. Ganapati Sastri** in Kerala in 1912. **Bhasa** is credited with thirteen plays from ancient India including ***Pancharatra***, ***Charudatta***, ***Dootaghatotkacha***, ***Urubhang*** and ***Dootavakyam***.

- ✿ **Harshavardhana**, a Pushyabhuti emperor, authored three Sanskrit plays – **Ratnavali** (about a beautiful princess named Ratnavali and a king named Udayana, where reference of Holi has been found), **Nagananda** (popular story of Vidyadhar King Jimutavahana's self-sacrifice to save the Naga) and **Priyadarsika** (a romantic comedy based on love between King Udayana and the heroine Priyadarsika, the daughter of King Dridhavarman).

Sanskrit Poetry

- ✿ This genre is also called *kavya* or poetry. Unlike the drama section where the story is the main focus of the text, poetry concentrates more on form, style, figure of speech and the like.
- ✿ One of the greatest Sanskrit poets is **Kalidasa**, who wrote **Kumarasambhavam** (the birth of Kumara or Kartikeya, the son of Shiva and Parvati), **Malavikāgnimitram** (love story of Agnimitra, the Shunga Emperor at Vidisha, and Malavika, a servant girl), **Raghuvamsa** (the dynasty of the Raghus) and **Vikramorvashiyam** (love story of Vikram and Urvashi). He also wrote two smaller epics called **Meghaduta** (the cloud messenger) and **Ritusamhara** (medley of seasons).

Harisena wrote several poems in praise of the valour of **Samudragupta**, and it was so well appreciated that it was inscribed on the **Allahabad** Pillar.

- ✿ **Dandin** (7th–8th century) was a Sanskrit grammarian and author of prose romances. His famous works include *Kavyadarsha* and *Dashakumaracharita* (*Tale of Ten Princes*).
- ✿ Another extremely popular Sanskrit poet was **Jayadeva**, who wrote **Gita Govinda** in the 12th century. It concentrates on the life and escapades of Lord Krishna. The text combines elements of devotion to Lord Krishna, his love for Radha and the beauty of nature.
- ✿ **Nayachandra Suri** (Jain scholar during 15th-century) wrote **Hammira Mahakavya** which is a Sanskrit epic poem and a legendary biography of the 13th century **Chahamana king Hammira**.
- ✿ **Somadeva Suri** (South Indian Jain monk of the 10th century) wrote **Upasakadyayana** (a central work of Digambara literature) and **Nitivakyamrita** (a treatise on Jain polity).

Other major poets are as follows:

Bharavi (6th century AD)	Kiratarjuniya (Kirata, the hunter, and Arjuna)
Magha (7th–8th century AD)	Shishupala Vadha (The killing of Shishupala)

Other Major Sanskrit Texts

- ✿ One of the most famous texts about statecraft from the Mauryan period is Kautilya's **Arthashastra**. It concentrates on the **economic** and **social conditions** of the Mauryan Empire. Due focus was also given to the **military strategy** that should be employed by the State. The text mentions that '**Kautilya**' or '**Vishnugupta**' wrote it. Historians argue that both these names were an alias for **Chanakya**, who was a learned scholar at the court of Emperor **Chandragupta Maurya**.

- While Sanskrit was the preferred language of the courts in the ancient period, it received an impetus in the Gupta period, with the employment of many great poets, dramatists and scholars of various subjects. In this period, Sanskrit became the preferred language of communication of cultured and educated people.

Some of the scientific texts written during the ancient period are as follows:

Pingala	Chandashastra (Book on Mathematics)
Charak	Charaka Samhita (Book on Medicine)
Sushruta	Sushruta Samhita (Book on Surgery)
Madhava	Madhava Nidana (Book on Pathology)
Varahamihira	Pancha-Siddhantika (Book on Mathematical Astronomy)
	Brihat-Samhita (Book on wide-ranging subjects like planetary movements, geology, architecture, etc.)
Aryabhata	Aryabhatiya (Book on Astronomy and Mathematics)
Lagadha	Vedanga Jyotisa
Bhasakara II	Siddhanta Shiromani

Although literature in Sanskrit was not so predominant in the **Medieval period**, some excellent works were composed in Rajasthan and Kashmir. Two of the most notable works in Sanskrit from medieval Kashmir are **Kalhana's Rajatarangini**, which gives a detailed account of the *Kings of Kashmir*, and **Somadeva's Kathasaritsagara**. The **Kathasaritsagara** (written in 11th century) is a Sanskrit collection of Indian legends, histories and folk tales by **Somadeva Bhatta**, a writer from Kashmir. **Vikramankadevacharita** is a Sanskrit epic (based on the life of Western Chalukya Empire King Vikramaditya VI) written by Kashmiri poet **Bilhana** during 11th century.



Literature in Pali and Prakrit

During the post-Vedic period, apart from Sanskrit, literature was also composed in Prakrit and Pali. Prakrit is a term which is loosely attached to any language derived from the standard one, i.e., Sanskrit. These languages gained prominence when religious literature of the **Buddhists** and **Jains** was composed. Gautama Buddha used Ardha Magadhi and Pali to preach his sermons.

Buddhist literature may be divided into canonical literature and non-canonical literature.

The **canonical** literature consists of '**Tripitaka**' or baskets (of knowledge) and they were written in Pali. The Tripitaka are as follows:

1. **Vinaya Pitaka** covers the *rules and regulations* that should be followed by Buddhist monks. It contains *Suttavibhanga* (covers the *rules for monks and nuns*), *Khandhaka* (accounts for the *awakenings of Gautama Buddha and his 10 principal disciples' awakenings*) and *Parivara* (analyses of the *rules identified in Suttavibhanga and Khandhaka*).
2. **Sutta Pitaka** contains the dialogues and speeches (more than 10,000 *suttas* or *teachings*) of Buddha that deal with *morality and righteous dharma*.

3. **Abhidhamma Pitaka** concentrates on *philosophy and metaphysics*. It also contains discussions on various topics such as ethics, theory of knowledge and psychology.

The **Jatakas** are the best example of Buddhist **Non-canonical** literature. These are a compilation of the stories from the **previous births of Buddha**. The stories of the **Bodhisattva** or the (future) would-be Buddha are also discussed in these *Jatakas*. Although these stories propagate Buddhist religious doctrines, they are available in Sanskrit and Pali. Each story of the birth of the Buddha is equivalent to a *Jataka* tale. It was believed that Buddha passed through **550 births** before he was born as **Gautama**. These tales combine the popular tales and ancient mythology as well as sociopolitical conditions in northern India.

The great epic **Buddhacharita by Asvaghosha** is an example of **Buddhist literature in Sanskrit**.

MulaMadhyamakakarika, (meaning 'Fundamentals of the Middle Way') is a Buddhist text written in Sanskrit by **Nagarjuna**, the exponent of the **Madhyamika** (Middle Way) school of Mahayana Buddhism. It is a work on the doctrine of ultimate emptiness that combines stringent logic and religious vision in a lucid presentation.

Another major religion, **Jainism**, produced texts in **Prakrit**. They form the basis of Jain canonical literature. Some of the Jain texts were also written in Sanskrit, such as the **Upamitibhava Prapancha Katha** of Siddharasi (906 AD). The most important Jain texts written in **Prakrit** are the **Agamas**.

Shantinatha Charitra is another important Jain text on the 16th *tirthankara*, Shantinatha, and was written in Sanskrit. It has been included in the **Memory of the World Register** by **UNESCO**, which has reported that 'the story is of lasting value to humankind'.

Lastly, Prakrit poetry has some elements of erotica through texts like the **Gatha Saptasati** (700 verses) **by Hala**. Hala has contributed only 44 verses to this volume. What sets it apart is the large number of **female poetesses** who have contributed to this work. The most prominent amongst them are Pahai, Roha, Sasippaha, Mahavi and Reva. *Gatha Saptasati* is called **opposite extreme to 'Kamasutra'**.

Other Buddhist Literary Texts

- **Dipavamsa:** It was probably composed in the 3rd–4th centuries AD in Anuradhapura (**Sri Lanka**). It literally means 'Chronicle of the Island'. It mentions the Buddha's visit to Sri Lanka and the arrival of the **tooth relic** of Buddha.
- **Milinda Panho:** It contains a dialogue between Indo-Greek King Menander I of Bactria (or Milinda) and Buddhist monk Nagasena. It means 'Questions of Milinda'. These are some of the highest philosophical enquiries.
- **Mahavamsa:** It is an epic poem similar to *Dipavamsa* and is written in the Pali language. It dates back to the 5th century AD and has an account of Buddha's visit to Ceylon (Sri Lanka), chronicles of the kings of Ceylon and so forth.

- **Mahavastu:** It is a canonical text of the **Mahāsāṃghika-Lokottaravāda** school of early Buddhism which was originally part of the Vinaya pitaka. It contains Jataka and Avadana tales. It is written in mixed Sanskrit, Pali and Prakrit. It is said to have been compiled between the 2nd century BC and 4th century AD.
- **Lalitavistara Sutra** meaning 'The play in full', is an important **Mahayana** text. It contains various stories associated with the life of Buddha until his first sermon at Sarnath. This is a reference to the Mahayana view that Buddha's last incarnation was a 'performance' given for the benefit of all beings.
- **Udana:** It is one of the **oldest Theravada** (Old School) Buddhist texts. It contains the famous story of the 'Blind Men and the Elephant'.
- **Bodhi-Vamsa:** It was a prose-poem (about the story of the Bodhi tree in Bodh Gaya), written in the 12th century in Sri Lanka. It was translated from a Sinhalese version. It was written by Upatissa in Sanskritised Pali.
- **Abhidharma Mahavibhasa Sashtra:** It is a treatise on **Sarvastivada Abhidharma** written around 150 AD. It is an encyclopedic work on **Abhidharma**, scholastic Buddhist philosophy, which resulted in the development of a new school of thought, called **Vaibhasika**, which was very influential in the history of Buddhist thought and practice. It also contains discussions about other non-Buddhist philosophies. It is essentially a Mahayana text.
- **Visuddhimagga:** It was written in Pali language by Buddhaghosa in the 5th century in Sri Lanka. It is a text of **Theravada** doctrine. It contains discussions on various teachings of Buddha.



Jain Texts

Apart from writing in **Prakrit** and **Ardha Magadhi**, Jain monks wrote in many other languages depending on the era, region and patrons who supported them.

- They **wrote in Tamil during the Sangam Age** in South India. They also wrote in **Sanskrit, Shauraseni, Gujarati, Kannada** and **Marathi**.
- They can be broadly divided into **two major categories: canonical or religious texts** called Jain Agamas or Agam and **non-canonical literary works**. Non-canonical literature in Jainism includes various texts called the **Niryuktis** and **Samhitas**. These were written by Bhadrabahu who was the last acharya before split in the Jain Sangha.



Jain Agamas

- They are sacred texts and are said to be the teachings of the Jain *tirthankaras*. They are said to have been originally compiled by the **Ganadharas** who were the chief disciples of Mahavira.
- The present *Angas* are said to have been recompiled in a council of **monks of the Svetambara** sect held under the leadership of Acharya Shraman Devardhigani, in **Vallabhi (Gujarat)**

during the mid-5th century AD. The *Digambara* sect believes that the original teachings were lost a long time ago, and they reject the authority of the *Agamas* compiled in Vallabhi.

- The *Agamas* comprise 45 texts. They are 11 *Angas*, 12 *Upangas*, 10 *Prakirnaka-sutras*, 4 *Mulasutras*, 6 *Chedasutras*, and 2 *Chulikasutras*.
- They were **written in the Ardhamagadhi Prakrit language**. The *Angas* teach reverence for all forms of life, strict codes of vegetarianism, asceticism, compassion and non-violence.
- Upangas are explanation of the *Agamas*; *Prakirnaka* sutras are texts on miscellaneous subjects, *mulasutras* are guiding texts for early days of monks, *chedasutras* are texts related to conduct and behaviour of monks and nuns and *Chulikasutras* enhance the meaning of *Angas*.
- The **Digambaras** gave sacred status to two works: the ***Karmaprabhrita*** (Discussion on Karma) or *Shatkhanda-gama* and the ***Kashayaprabhrita***.

Some of **other important Jain works** and authors are listed below:

- **Bhadrabahu** (3rd century BC) is one of the greatest Jain monks and was the **teacher of Chandragupta Maurya**. He wrote the sacred ***Uvasaggaharam Stotra*** (adoration of the 23rd Tirthankara Parshvanatha) and ***Kalpa Sutra*** (Biographies of Jain tirthankaras). He was the pioneer of the ***Digambara sect***. Acharya Kundkund's ***Samayasara and Niyamasara*** discuss Jain philosophy.
- Samantabhadra's ***Ratna-Karanda-Sravakachara*** (Life of a Jain householder) and ***Aptamimansa*** were written around the 2nd century AD.
- Tirutakkatevar's ***Civaka Cintamani*** is one of the epics of Tamil literature.
- **Nalatiyar**, an ancient Tamil text, was composed by Jain monks.
- Umaswami's ***Tattvarthasutra*** (around 2nd–5th century AD) is an important Jain work in **Sanskrit** on logic, epistemology, ethics and astronomy (accepted both by the *Digambara* and *Svetambara* sects).
- **Jinasena** (around 8th–9th century AD) was a revered *Digambara* monk. He wrote ***Mahapurana*** and ***Adipurana***. He was the disciple of Virasena another famous Jain Monk.
- **Subhachandra** was the author of ***Pandavapurana***.
- **Haribhadra Suri** (around 5th–6th century AD) was a *Svetambara* Jain author who wrote in Sanskrit. His major writings include ***Saddarsanasamuccaya*** (compares Jainism with other schools of Indian philosophy) and ***Samaraiccakaha*** (illustrating the workings of Karma).
- **Hemachandra Suri** (12th century) was a famous Jain scholar who wrote on the grammar of Sanskrit and Prakrit, poetry, prosody and the like. He was awarded the title of ***Kalikalasarvajna***, 'the all-knowing of the Kaliyuga'.

The **Universities of Vallabhi and Kalinga** were important centres of learning for Jains before they began to decline.

Between the 9th and 12th centuries, Jain monks wrote extensively in **Kannada**. **Pampa**, **Ponna** and **Ranna**, the three gems of Kannada literature, are the famous writers related to Jainism.

With the revival of Hinduism and the spreading of **Lingayats** in **Karnataka**, the popularity of Jainism declined and, thus, a reduction in literary works was seen after the 12th–13th century.

Zoroastrian Literature

Zoroastrianism refers to the religion developed from the teachings of the Persian prophet Zoroaster or **Zarathushtra**. The Zoroastrian name of the religion is **Mazdayasna**, which combines Mazda – with the Avestan word yasna meaning worship or devotion. Zoroastrianism influenced the history, culture and art of Persia, as well as the development of other religions. According to scholars, Zoroastrianism was the first religion to believe in angels, a day of judgement, a demonic figure, and **a battle between the forces of good and evil**.

During the reign of the Sassanid Empire in Iran, the religion went through reforms, and lots of texts were written and re-interpreted.

The most important text is called the **Avesta**, a collection of various texts dealing with **religious beliefs, practices and instruction**, which was written and compiled over a period of time. It was **written in the Avestan language**, which is now extinct. It is **similar to Sanskrit**. It was compiled in its final form during the Sassanian rule of Iran, probably in the **4th century AD**.

In the Avesta, **Yasna** is a collection of texts with 72 chapters and is of great importance. Amongst them, the '**Gathas**', which are five chapters containing 17 hymns, are the most revered ones and supposed to be written by Zoroaster himself. Yasna also refers to the most important ceremony of the faith. **Vendidad/Videvdad** are laws against the demons. **Yashts** are praise as a form of worship. **Khordeh Avesta** is a book on daily prayers.

Some important texts other than the Avesta are as follows:

- **Denkard:** It is a collection of books and contains various aspects of the faith. It is regarded as the **Encyclopaedia of Zoroastrianism**. It does not have a divine status. It was written in the **10th century AD**.
- **Bundahishn:** It literally means '**Primal Creations**'. It provides details about the theory of creation in the religion. It contains astronomical ideas and theories. The battles of 'Ahura Mazda' and 'Angra Mainyu' are also mentioned. Most of the chapters were written in the **8th and 9th centuries**.



Sikh Literature

Sikhism, a relatively new religion, was established in the 15th century and is based on the teachings of Guru Nanak. The beliefs and philosophies of Sikhism are written in the religion's sacred scripture, the **Guru Granth Sahib**. **Gurbani** is the composition and hymns of the Sikh Gurus and the Guru Granth Sahib.

The important literary works related to Sikhism are as follows:

- **Adi Granth:** It was compiled by **Bhai Gurdas** under the aegis of the fifth guru, **Guru Arjan Dev, in 1604**. It is a predecessor to the Guru Granth Sahib. The book contains the teachings of the Sikh Gurus and 15 Bhagats of the Bhakti and Sufi traditions.
- **Guru Granth Sahib:** The Adi Granth was further expanded in 1678 under the 10th guru, **Guru Gobind Singh**.
 - ❖ It is of great importance to the Sikhs. It is regarded as the **11th and final spiritual authority** of the Sikhs.
 - ❖ It is written in the **Gurmukhi script** and is in a language called '**Sant Bhasha**'. Sant Bhasha contains words from various languages, for example, Punjabi, Apabhramsa, Hindi, Braj Bhasha, Sanskrit, Khariboli and Persian.
 - ❖ The book also contains the **teachings of Bhakti saints, called 'Bhagats'**, for example, Ramananda, Namdev, Ravidas, Parmanand, Sain, and Surdas and two Muslim Bhagats – Kabir and Baba Farid.
- **Dasam Granth:** It is believed that the hymns written by **Guru Gobind Singh** are compiled in this book; however, many do not agree with this. These contain fables and Puranic stories. Some hymns of the book are supposed to be recited during the daily prayers called **Nitnem**. It is mostly written in Braj Bhasha, with some parts in Avadhi, Punjabi, Persian and Hindi.
- **Janamsakhis:** These books contain the mythological and exaggerated stories of the first guru, Guru Nanak. The most popular book is *Bhai Bala Janamsakhi*. Others are *Miharban Janams-sakhi* and *Adi Janam-sakhi*.

Ardas: It is a set of prayers recited while performing the daily rituals **in the Gurudwara**, such as during the opening of the Guru Granth Sahib or its closing. It contains three parts, first one being the virtues of 10 Sikh gurus.

Five Banis: These are 5 prayers taken from **Guru Granth Sahib** and **Dasam Granth** which are recited daily as a commitment to the Sikh Gurus and Waheguru. The five banis are **Japji Sahib**, **Jaap Sahib** and **Tav-Prasad Saaide** (for morning recitals), **Benti Chaupai** and **Anand Sahib** (for evening recitals).



Dravidian Literature

- This section comprises literature in **four major** Dravidian languages: **Tamil, Kannada, Telugu and Malayalam**.

- Amongst these four languages, **Tamil** is supposed to be the oldest and is supposedly very **close to Sanskrit**, especially in terms of the grammar and the borrowing of words.
- The most famous literature in Tamil is the classical works or **Sangam literature**.

Tamil Sangam Literature

- 'Sangam' means fraternity, and this literature was very popular amongst the masses. This literature is a **collection of works** that contains approximately 2381 poems that have been attributed to 473 poets. There is also a corpus of literature written by 102 poets who remain anonymous. It is the earliest known literature of South India.
- The poets included men and women from different classes of society. The literary tradition was so popular that the period between **300 BC and 300 AD**, during which most of these were composed and compiled, is often called the Sangam period.

There are **two major schools** of Sangam literature:

- The first school is the '**Aham/Agam**' or the 'inner field', which concentrates on discussion of abstract human aspects such as **love** and **sexual relations**.
- The second school is the '**Puram**' or the 'outer field', which discusses **human experiences and emotions** such as social life, ethics, valour and customs.
- This literature bears the name 'Sangam' because the Pandya Kingdom organised assemblies where poets, bards and writers joined from various parts of South India gathered, and these **assemblies** were called '**Sangamas**'.
- The literature produced during the duration of these assemblies was called Sangam literature.
- There were three Sangams organised over a period of 600–700 years. However, the conclusive historical accounts of the first two Sangams are not available. The first and second Sangams are considered legends and myths by many scholars.

Sangam	Kingdom	Place Organised	Chairman	Books
First or Head	Pandya	Madurai	Agastya or Shiva	No book has survived. Used <i>Agattiyam</i> as grammar.
Second or Middle	Pandya	Kapatapuram	Initially it was Agastya, and then his disciple Tolkaippiyar took over	Around 2000 poems were collected and compiled into <i>Tolkappiyam</i> . <i>Tolkappiyam</i> is a textbook on Tamil grammar giving the inflection and syntax of words and sentences, and it also includes the classification of habitats, animals, plants and human beings.
Third	Pandya	Madurai	Nakkirar	Most of the existing corpus of Sangam literature was written during this period.

- It is also interesting to note that in Sangam literature, around 30, 000 lines of poetry have been arranged in eight anthologies called **Ettuthokai**.
- The very famous and revered Tamil saint **Thiruvalluvar** contributed the **Tirukkural** to Sangam literature. It has now been translated into several languages and is divided into three parts which discuss the epics, polity-governance and love.

- Another famous **female saint** who contributed to Sangam literature is **Avvaiyar**. Other female poets of Sangama period were **Nachchellaiyar** and **Kakkaipadiniyar** who contributed to Tamil literature.

Apart from Sangam literature, there are many other well-known texts written in Tamil.

- The **Tolkappiyam** was written to elaborate on the nuances of Tamil grammar and poetry.
- Like the twin Sanskrit epics, the *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata*, even Tamil has two major texts written in the 5th–6th century AD, i.e., **Silappadikaram** (Tale of an Anklet) which was written by **Ilango Adigal**, and the **Manimekalai** (The Story of Manimekalai), written by **Satanar**. These texts focus on *Tamil society* and the *economic and political changes* it was experiencing.

Tolkappiyam

It is acknowledged as the earliest surviving Tamil literary work and was written by **Tolkappiyar** (one of the 12 disciples of saint Agastya). It is a work on the **grammar** of spoken and written language Tamil. It talks about the twofold walks of life, the *aham* or *agam* and *puram*. It also deals with the cultural history and geographical studies of ancient Tamil Land.

Silappadikaram

This earliest Tamil epic (palm leaf manuscript) is a **tragic love story**, which involves the ordinary couple, **Kannaki**, and her husband Kovalan, and Kovalan's later love Madhavi. The couple is caught up with universal questions and internal, emotional war. *Silappadikaram* literally means the **tale of an anklet**, as the anklet belonging to Kannaki plays a vital role in the story. It revolves around **Kannaki**, who having lost her husband to a miscarriage of justice at the court of the King of the Pandyan Dynasty, wreaks her revenge on his kingdom. The River **Cauveri, Sun, Moon and the city of Poompuhar** are praised by author **Ilango-Adigal** in this Tamil epic, written around the 5th–6th century. It is believed to have **Jain elements**.

Manimekalai

It is again a Tamil epic composed by **Satanar** probably around the 6th century. It is an **anti-love story**, a sequel to the love story in the earliest Tamil epic. It describes the story of **Manimekalai**, the beautiful daughter of Kovalan and Madhavi. She was a nun of **Mahayana Buddhism**. The text is believed to have **Buddhist elements**.

Sangama Period Cultural Practices

Some important cultural practices during the Sangama Period were:

- Hereditary monarchy was the form of government during the Sangam period. The imperial court was known as **avai**.
- Silappadikaram** referred to the two types of councils – **Aimperunkulu** and **Enperayam**.
- Aimperunkulu** or the council of five members was the council of the ministers.

- **Enperayam** or the great assembly (perayam) consisted of 8 members (government officers).
- The **Pattinappalai** referred to the custom officials employed in the seaport of **Puhar**.
- **Tolkappiyam** referred to the fivefold division of lands based on the occupations of the people living in these lands viz. **Kurinji** (Hunting and honey collection), **Mullai** (Cattle-rearing), **Marudam** (Agriculture), **Neydal** (Fishing and salt manufacturing), **Palai** (Robbery)
- Four different castes have been mentioned in Tolkappiyam viz. 1. **Arasar** (The ruling class) 2. **Anthanars** (related to Sangam polity and religion), 3. **Vanigars** (carried on trade and commerce) and 4. **Vellalas** (agriculturists).
- The primary deity of the Sangam period was **Seyon** or **Murugan**.
- Singing bards in royal courts were called Panar and Viraliyar (who were skilled in folk songs and folk dances).
- Dancing was performed by **Kanigaiyar**. **Koothu** (folk art or informal dance) was the most popular entertainment of the people.
- **Vatakkiruttal** was a Tamil ritual of fasting till death during the Sangam age. The Tamil kings, were prepared to meet their death facing North, to save their honour and prestige, and they would never turn their backs in battle after defeat.
- The port city of **Puhar** became a centre of foreign trade.

Bhakti Literature

- The final turn came during the early Medieval period when Vaishnava Bhakti sentiments began to colour Tamil literature. Texts composed between the 7th and 12th centuries were highly devotional in nature.
- In Tamil-speaking regions, the 12 **Alvars** or saint poets, who were immersed in the devotion of Vishnu (or his avatar Krishna), wrote several texts. One of the Alvar saints was a woman called **Andal**.
- Another important *Bhakti* group was the **Nayanars** or those who sang the praises of **Shaivism**.
- Besides these, in the **Tamil writings**, two great literary works **Periya Puranam** and **Kamba Ramayanam** (also known as Ramavataram) were very popular and were developed during the Chola period. Kambar wrote this epic with the patronage of Thiruvennai Nallur Sadayappa Vallal, a Pannai kula chieftain. In gratitude to his patron, Kamban references his name once in every 1, 000 verses.
- **Thayumanavar** (1705–44) was another Tamil spiritual philosopher who articulated the **Shaiva Siddhanta philosophy**. He wrote several Tamil hymns. In his **Sittar poetry**, he protested against the abuses of temple entry and the caste system.

Periya Puranam

The text **Periya Puranam** was written by **Sekkizhar** in **12th century AD** during the **Chola period** (rule of **Kulottunga II**), and it gives a **poetic account of the lives of 63 Nayanars**. It is a masterpiece of **Tamil literature** and is ranked as the **fifth Veda in Tamil**.

Malayalam Literature

- ✿ Malayalam is usually spoken in **Kerala** and the surrounding areas.
- ✿ Two of the major Malayalam works of the Medieval period are **Kokasandisan** and **Bhasa Kautilya** (a commentary on the *Arthashastra*).
- ✿ Another major literary work in Malayalam is **Ramacharitam**, an epic poem written by **Cheeraman** in the 12th century. **Thirunizhalmala** (Garland of the Sacred Shade) and **Ramacharitam** are two epic poems written in old Malayalam. They belong to the '**pattu**' genre of poems of Malayalam language and are the earliest literary works of Malayalam.
- ✿ **Ezhuthachan**, a strong proponent of the Bhakti movement, is known as the **Father of the Malayalam Language**.

Vallathol Narayana Menon was a Malayalam poet in the 20th century and one of the triumvirate poets of modern Malayalam poetry, along with **Kumaran Asan** and **Ulloor S. Parameshwara Iyer**. His magnum opus is **Mahakavya Chitrayogam**.

Telugu Literature

- ✿ Linguists have argued that **Nannayya** (11th century AD) was the first poet in Telugu. He translated the **Mahabharata** from Sanskrit to Telugu.
- ✿ The oldest Telugu inscription is the '**Tippalar inscription**' and '**Bhodampudu inscription**' from the 7th century AD.
- ✿ Several great works have been written in Telugu, but it reached its zenith during the **Vijayanagara period**, which is also known as the **Golden Age of Telugu Literature**. It is also called the **Prabandha Age** because poets like Allasani Peddana wrote during this period Kavyas which are popularly known as the '**Prabandhas**'.
- ✿ One of the most successful works in this period is titled **Uttarahaarivamsam**, which was composed by **Nachana Somanatha**, a well-known court poet of **King Bukka I**.
- ✿ Not only were the court poets producing outstanding literature, even some kings composed exceptional poetry, such as **Krishnadevaraya** (1509–29), who wrote **Amuktamalyada**.

During Krishnadevaraya's reign, eight learned Telugu poets were attached to his court. They were called **ashtadiggajas**. Out of these, the following deserve special attention:

Poet	Name of the Work
Allasani Peddana (also known as <i>Andhra Kavita Pitamahudu</i>)	<i>Manu Charitra</i>
Nandi Thimmana	<i>Parijatapaharanamu</i> (based on a story of <i>Harivamsam</i>)
Tenali Ramakrishna (He was a court jester and poet. He is said to have been a duo with the king, and the stories of <i>Tenali Raman</i> have been circulated even in modern times)	<i>Panduranga Mahatmayam, Ghatikachala Mahatymam</i> (<i>Vaishnava devotional text</i>) and <i>Udbhataradhyha Charitramu</i> (<i>Shaivite text</i>)
Ramaraja Bhushanudu (also known as Bhattumurti)	<i>Vasucharitram</i>
Madayyagari Mallana	<i>Narasabhapaleeyamu</i>
Ayyalaraju Ramabhadrudu	<i>Harishchandra Nalopakhyanam, Kavyalankarasangrahamu</i>
Pingali Surana	<i>Rajasekaracharitra</i> (About the love and war of King Rajasekara of the kingdom of Avanti)
	<i>Ramabhudayamu</i>
	<i>Raghava Pandaveeyam</i> (describing both <i>Ramayana</i> and <i>Mahabharata</i>), <i>Kalapurnodayam</i> (first original poetic novel in Telugu)

Krishnadevaraya – A Great Scholar and Patron of Literature

- He was a scholar and patron of many languages, which included **Telugu, Kannada, Tamil and Sanskrit**.
- The reign of **Krishnadevaraya (1509–29)** in the Vijayanagara Empire is known as the **Golden Age of Telugu Literature**.
- Eight learned literary persons were attached to his court, and they were called **ashtadiggajas**, the most important one being **Allasani Peddana**.
- He patronised the **Kannada poets** Mallanarya, Chatu Vittal-anatha, and Thimmana. **Vyasatirtha**, a Kannada saint, was his **Rajaguru**.
- Krishnadevarayana Dinachari** in Kannada is one of his famous works.
- He, while travelling via Vijayawada during his Kalinga campaign, himself **wrote** **Amuktamalyada**, which is a treatise stating the instance of **Lord Vishnu** in his dream.
- He **also wrote treatises in Sanskrit**, which include *Madalasa Charita, Satyavadu Parinaya* and *Rasamanjari* and *Jambavati Kalyana*.
- He patronised the Tamil poet **Haridasa**.

20th century modern Telugu literature was shaped by **K. Veereshalingam Pantulu** who wrote the first Telugu Novel '**Rajasekhara Charitramu**'.

Kannada Literature

- ❖ The Jain scholars made the first foray into Kannada literature. The best example of a Jain-influenced text is **Dharmanathapurana** by **Madhava** on the life of the 15th tirthankara.
- ❖ Kannada is the second oldest language in South India. The oldest Kannada inscription is the '**Halmidi inscription**' from the 5th century AD.
- ❖ Several other Jain scholars wrote on the Jain teachings of this period, for example, Uritta Vilasa who wrote **Dharma Parikshe**.
- ❖ One of the first recorded texts in Kannada is called **Kavirajamarga**, which was written by **Amoghavarsha I** in the 9th century. He was also a very powerful Rashtrakuta king. He also authored **Prashnottara Ratnamalika** in Sanskrit.

Kannada language has many great poets but the 'three gems or **Ratnatraya**' were unparalleled. They were:

- ❖ **Pampa** (9th–10th century AD)
- ❖ **Ponna** (9th–10th century AD)
- ❖ **Ranna** (10th–11th century AD)

- ❖ It was also in the 10th century that Pampa, better known as the 'Father of Kannada', wrote two of his greatest poetic works, **Adipurana** (written in **Champu style**) and **Vikramarjuna Vijaya** (also known as **Pampa Bharatha**). Pampa, who was renowned for his mastery over the *rasa* involved in the poetic compositions, was attached to the court of **Chalukya Arikesari**.
- ❖ The second gem or **Ponna** has written a famous treatise, titled **Shanti Purana** (a biography of 16th Jain Tirthankar Shantinath), and the third gem **Ranna** has authored **Ajitha Purana** (based on the life of 2nd Jain Tirthankar Ajitanatha). These two poets were attached to the court of the Rashtrakuta King Krishna III. Another creation of Ranna is **Sahasa Bhima Vijaya**, also known as **Gada Yuddha**. **Ponna** was bestowed with the title **Ubhaya Kavichakravarthi** for his command in both Sanskrit and Kannada.
- ❖ Although Kannada became a full-fledged language by the 10th century, the growth of Kannada literature has been closely attributed to the patronage from the Vijayanagara Empire. Once the literature flourished, several books clarifying the grammar of the language were written, such as **Shabdamanidarpana** by Keshiraja.
- ❖ Several quasi-religious texts were also composed in this period. **Narahari** composed **Torave Ramayana**, which is inspired by *Valmiki Ramayana* and said to be the first story on Rama in Kannada.
- ❖ Another famous text was **Jaimini Bharata**, which was written by Lakshmisha.
- ❖ What sets Kannada literature apart was its close association with the people who read it. The title of being the *people's poet* was given to **Sarvajna** (16th century), who composed **tripadi** (three-line poems).
- ❖ Even more exceptional is **Honnamma**, the **first poetess** of some repute in Kannada, who wrote **Hadibadeya Dharma** (Duty of a devout wife).

- ❖ **Madana Vijaya** or **Kabbigara Kava** was written by **Andayya** (this is the first pure Kannada text without any Sanskrit word).

Champu

It is a literary style that is a combination of poetry and prose. This style or genre has been used in Telugu, Odia and Kannada, as well as Sanskrit literature.



Medieval Literature

Several different trends emerged in the Medieval period which affected the languages and dialects that emerged. The major change was the emergence of Persian as the writing language of the Delhi Sultanate and the Mughal courts. This period also saw the **development of Hindi** from the ancient **Apabhramsa** language, which was further derived from Prakrit.



Persian

- ❖ Although the roots of the Persian language are as old as Sanskrit, it came to India with the coming of the **Turks and Mongols** in the **12th century**. It is during their rule that Persian became the mode of communication of the court.
- ❖ One of the finest Persian poets is **Amir Khusrau Dehlavi** of the 12th–13th century. Apart from his **Divan** (collection of poetry in Persian), he also wrote **Nuh Sipahr** and the **Duval Rani-Khizr Khan**, which is a tragic love poem.
- ❖ In the Delhi Sultanate, multiple texts were written in Persian. Most of them were concerned with creating histories for the rulers. Ziauddin **Barani** is amongst the top *historians* of that period and he wrote **Tarikh-e-Firoz Shahi** and **Fatwa-i-Jahandari**.
- ❖ Another famous historian was **Minhaj-i-Siraj**. There are several travel accounts written by travellers that explain the sociopolitical scenario of the period, such as those by the famous Moroccan traveller **Ibn Battuta**.
- ❖ The production and dissemination of literature in Persian shot up in the Mughal period. Mughal emperor **Babur** wrote his *autobiography* **Baburnama** (Tuzk-e-Babri) in Turkish, which provides important information about the Mughal conquest of India.
- ❖ One of the greatest sources about the period of Jahangir was **Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri** (autobiography of Jahangir).
- ❖ Another important work is **Humayun Nama**, which gives an account of Humayun's life and his struggles to get the throne. It was written by his half-sister, **Gulbadan Begum**.
- ❖ The greatest emperor of this period was **Akbar**, and **Ain-e-Akbari** (volume III of *Akbarnama*) written by his court historian **Abul Fazl**, is the best example of the literature of this period. He ordered several translations of Sanskrit texts such as the *Ramayana*, the *Bhagawad Gita* and several *Upanishads* into Persian. The *Mahabharata* was translated into Persian and was

called **Razmnama** by Badauni (1540–1605). **Haji Ibrahim Sirhindi** translated the *Atharva Veda* into Persian. In 1574, Akbar founded **Maktab Khana** or a **house of translation works** in his new capital Fatehpur Sikri.

- **Faizi** (*elder brother of Abul Fazl*) was considered a master of Persian poetry and was amongst the Navaratnas in the court of Akbar. He translated Bhaskaracharya's **Lilavati** into Persian.
- **Tarikh-i-Akbari**, also known as *Muzaffar Nama* (*compiled by Mohammad Arif Qandhari*), the first chronicle of Emperor Akbar's reign, is an important source of information on the 16th-century history of India (particularly the formative years of his career). This book is compiled by Mohammad Arif Qandhari.
- One of the highly illustrated works from this period is called **Hamzanama**, which depicts the story of the mythical Persian hero Amir Hamza.
- **Malik Muhammad Jayasi** composed his **Padmavat** in 1540 AD.
- Several texts were produced in the period of **Shah Jahan**, especially about the emperor such as **Shahjahannama** of Inayat Khan.
- **Jahanara Begum**, daughter of Shah Jahan wrote '**Munis-al-Arwah**' which is the biography of Shaikh Muinuddin Chisti as a tribute to the great Sufi saint.
- In Aurangzeb's period, several satirists **Jafar Zatalli** wrote their **kulliyat** (collection of poetry), for example, **Jafar Zatalli**. **Padshahnama** was written by Abdul Hamid Lahori and was **about Shah Jahan's reign**. *Alamgirnamah* (History of Aurangzeb) was written by **Mirza Muhammad Kazim**.

Aurangzeb's eldest daughter **Zeb-un-Nissa** was a great poet, and her writings were compiled posthumously as '**Diwan-i-Makhfi**'. She was imprisoned by her father during her last 20 years of life.

- **Kalila wa Dimna** is a collection of fables in Arabic which features animals, including two jackals named **Kalila** and **Dimna**, appearing both as narrators and protagonists. The book is a translation of Sanskrit text **Pancatantra**, which was translated into old **Persian** in the 6th century and was translated into Arabic in the 8th century.

Urdu

- Linguists have debated that Urdu developed through the interaction of Persian and Hindi, especially in the barracks of the Turkish army. Linguistically it is Indo-Aryan, born in India and built on the same basic structure of Hindi (Khari Boli).
- Amir Khusrau also wrote several texts in Urdu, which was in its nascent stage during this period.
- The language mostly follows the grammar of Hindi and the form and script of Persian. As it was used by the Bahmani states of Ahmadnagar, Golconda, Bijapur and Berar, it was initially also called **Dakkani** (southern).

- One of the greatest Urdu poets is **Mirza Ghalib** (1797–1869), who composed **Diwan** (collection of poetry) in Urdu.
- Some other notable Urdu poets were Sauda, Dard and Mir Taqi Mir. In the 20th century, a major figure in Urdu literary writing was **Iqbal**, who wrote **Bang-e-Dara**. He is famous for writing '**Sare Jahan se Achha**', which has become a celebrated nationalistic song.
- Apart from the last emperors of the Mughal Empire who patronised Urdu, such as Bahadur Shah Zafar, a noted poet, the Nawabs of Awadh also patronised several scholars who composed in Urdu.
- In the 20th century, Urdu was given an uplift by the moderniser Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, who wrote several didactic and nationalistic texts in Urdu and English. He published a journal called **Tahdhib-ul-Akhlaq**, which propagated progressive ideas such as the improvement in the position of women through education and opposed purdah and polygamy.

Qaseeda – A qaseeda has a **single presiding subject** that is logically developed and concluded. It is generally written **in praise of a king** or a nobleman. Qaseedas are recited in Arabic, Persian or Tajik by the Ismailis in Central Asia.

Ginans – They are devotional hymns recited by the Nizari Ismaili Muslim communities (**Khojas**) in South Asia. The ginans involve topics of divine love, cosmology, rituals, eschatology, ethical behaviour and meditation. They were originally oral renditions mostly by the Pirs, but were later composed as texts. They are based on verses from the **Quran**. They are composed in many languages, such as Gujarati, Urdu, Punjabi, and Sindhi.

Shahr Ashob – It is an ancient Urdu poetic genre in South Asia. Ashobs generally describe the emotional thoughts of a writer in a narrative poem based on several competencies. It was widely used by the poets during the **Mughal Empire** to express their **anguish and sorrows** over political and social shifts.



Hindi and its Dialects

- Hindi as we know it today evolved between the 7th and 14th century from **Apabhramsa**, which evolved from Prakrit. The language received its biggest boost with the **Bhakti movement**, which shunned the use of Sanskrit as it was the language of the Brahmins and the common people did not use it. Hence, writers started using the language of the people, and from the 12th century onwards, a sharp rise in regional languages such as Bengali, Hindi, Marathi and Gujarati was seen.
- For a long time, Hindi literature was in the shadow of its Sanskrit antecedents. **Prithviraj Raso**, written by Chand Bardai, was probably the **first Hindi book**, and it documents the life of Prithviraj Chauhan and the challenges faced by him.
- The bulk of the work is poetry by Bhakti writers such as **Kabir**, who is famous for his **dohas** (couplets) that are used by the common people of India even today.
- Tulsidas** was another Vaishnava saint (devotee of Rama) who became immortal by writing **Ramcharitmanas** in the Awadhi language. Other texts written by him include **Vinaya**

Patrika, Krishna Gitavali, Kavitavali, Gitavali, Sahitya Ratna, Dohavali, and Vairagya Sandipani.

- Lord Krishna's life also became the subject of various medieval poets, for example, **Surdas** who wrote **Sur Sagar**, which was about Krishna's infancy and his adolescent affairs with the *gopis*. Rahim, Bhushan and Raskhan also wrote about the devotion to Lord Krishna.
- Mirabai** is also famous as the woman who renounced the world for Lord Krishna and wrote *bhakti* poetry and bhajans for him.
- In the 16th–17th century, **Narayana Bhatta Goswami** wrote over 50 *bhakti*-granthas. His famous Vraja Mandal Parikrama guide titled **Vraja Bhakti Vilasa** states he discovered 333 forests and holy places of Sri Krishna.
- Satsai** is a famous work of the early 17th-century Hindi poet **Bihari**, which is based on devotion and love and in the Braj Bhasha dialect of Hindi and is based on devotion and love.



Modern Literature

The period of modern literature has been called 'Adhunik kaal' (a term used mostly in the context of Hindi). Hindi emerged as one of the major languages in northern India along with several other languages making their mark, especially Bengali.

Hindi

With the coming of the British, the focus of literature changed. This change occurred phenomenally in Hindi prose writing where there was a zest to go back to the classics and be inspired by Sanskrit. This zest was combined with nationalistic fervour.

- Bharatendu Harishchandra** wrote his most famous drama **Andher Nagari** (City of Darkness) in 1881, and this became a major play on political satire. His other very famous nationalist work is **Bharat Durdasha**. He is called the 'Father of Modern Hindu Literature'.
- Another major writer from this period is **Mahavir Prasad Dwivedi**, after whom an entire phase of Hindi writing has been named.

In the modern period of Hindi called **Adhunik kaal**, there are four sub-sections:

Bhartendu Yug: Famous writers of this period are Radhakrishna Das, Pratapnarayan Mishra, Balkrishna Bhatta, Badrinarayan Chaudhuri and Sudhakar Dwivedi. 1850–1900

Dwivedi Yug: Famous writers of this period are Nathuram Sharma Sankar, Ram Naresh Tripathi, Ayodhya Sinha Upadhyay and Maithalisharan Gupt. 1900–18

Chhayavad Yug: Popular poets of this period are Subhadrakumari Chauhan, Sumitranandan Pant, Mahadevi Verma, Jayashankar Prasad and Makhanlal Chaturvedi. 1918–37

Contemporary Period: Ramdhari Singh Dinkar, Bhagvati Charan Varma and Harivansh Rai Bacchan were famous poets in this period. 1937– present

- The movement to make Hindi the national language, which would link all regions, was spearheaded by **Swami Dayanand** even though he wrote quite a lot in Gujarati. His most famous work in Hindi is **Satyartha Prakash**, written in 1875.
- Several Hindi authors such as Munshi Premchand, Suryakant Tripathi 'Nirala' and Maithili Sharan Gupt questioned the orthodoxies in society. Premchand wrote many anthologies in Hindi and Urdu, and his famous works include **Godaan** and **Karmabhoomi**.
- Harivansh Rai Bachchan wrote **Madhushala** and **Madhukalash**.
- One of the most famous female writers of Hindi in the 20th century was **Mahadevi Verma**.
- Jaishankar Prasad's **Kamayani** (1936) is considered as the magnum opus of the Chhayavaad (neo-romanticism) genre of Hindi literature.



Bengali, Odia and Assamese Literature

Bengali Literature

- In the 20th century, the development of Bengali literature rivalled that of Urdu and Hindi. The distribution of this literature was facilitated by the establishment of the **Baptist Mission Press** at Serampore, Bengal, by Englishman, **William Carey**, in 1800. Carey was also responsible for writing a book about the grammar of Bengali and also published an English-Bengali dictionary. His press inspired wealthy local Bengalis to open their own presses and disseminate literature in Bengali.
- Charyapada**, a collection of mystic songs of the 10th and 11th centuries, is considered the oldest literary document of the Bengali language. This was discovered by Bengali scholar **Haraprasad Shastri** in Nepal Durbar Library in 1916.
- Although a lot of ancient and medieval literary works existed in Bengali before the 19th century, such as the **Mangal-Kavyas**, they had not been widely published.
- It was with the nationalistic fervour reaching Bengal that the literature took a definite turn towards the concerns and suffering of the common man and the nation's plight under British rule. **Raja Ram Mohan Roy (1772–1833)** was amongst the first to write in Bengali and English, and his work was widely read. He laid the real foundation of Bengali prose and also heralded the Indian Renaissance.
- His legacy was carried forward by social reformers such as **Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar (1820–91)** and Akshay Kumar Dutta (1820–86), whose writings revealed the rich potential of the Bengali language.
- The zenith of nationalistic Bengali literature was achieved with the writing of **Bankim Chandra Chatterjee (1838–94)**. His work **Anandamath** was hugely popular, so much so that **Vande Mataram**, our national song, is an excerpt from this novel.
- The first Indian (also the first Asian) to win a Nobel Prize was the Bengali writer **Rabindranath Tagore (1861–1941)**. He got this award for his Bengali masterpiece **Gitanjali** in 1913. Both the national anthems of India and Bangladesh were written by him.

- **Michael Madhusudan Dutt** successfully inculcated the European forms into Bengali poetry as in his epic poem Meghnad Badh Kavya, based on an episode of the *Ramayana*. The poem is based on the demise of Meghnad, son of Ravana and was published in 1861. His **Tilottama Sambhava Kavya** (1860) was the first Bengali poem written in blank verse.
- **Sarat Chandra Chatterjee, Qazi Nazrul Islam** and **R.C. Dutt** also made important contributions to Bengali literature.

Assamese Literature

- In the Medieval period, **Assamese** literature was dominated by **buranjis** (court chronicles).
- Apart from these official works, **Sankardev** in the 15th–16th century composed devotional poetry in Assamese.
- In the context of modern Assamese literature, major scholars are, namely **Padmanath Gohain Baruah, Lakshminath Bezbaroa, Jyoti Prasad Agarwalla, Arupa Patangia** and **Parismita Singh** have made their mark.

Odia Literature

- From the East of India, a sizeable corpus comes from Odia literature. The first major work came from **Sarala Das** (15th century).
- In the Medieval period, one of the outstanding writers was **Upendra Bhanja**, who wrote in the early 18th century.
- Jaydev was one of the well known poets of Odia literature, most known for his **Gita Govinda** (**Geet Govindam** in Sanskrit). Every night in the Jagannatha temple of Puri, the Gita Govinda of **Jayadeva** is sung in the style of Odissi music, a tradition that has continued unbroken since the time of **Jayadeva** himself.
- Odia literature was enhanced by the contributions of the five poets (popularly known as **Panchasakha**). They were Jagannath Das, Balaram Das, Achyutanda Das, Yasovanta Das and Ananta Das.
- In the Modern period, **Radhanath Ray** and **Fakir Mohan Senapati** have made their mark with the nationalistic tenor of their work.

Gujarati, Rajasthani and Sindhi Literature

Gujarati Literature

- As mentioned earlier, the *Bhakti* movement was at its peak in Gujarat, and that affected the literature composed there. **Narsinh Mehta** (15th century) is a very popular name in this area as he combined devotional songs for Lord Krishna with local folk traditions.
- The later period saw poetry by **Narmad** (19th century) and prose by **Govardhanram Madhavram Tripathi** (19th–20th century), who wrote the classic Gujarati novel, **Saraswatichandra**, which was recently made into a television series.

- The pinnacle of success in Gujarati literature was achieved by **Dr K.M. Munshi**, who has written both fictional and non-fictional (historical) work. One of his finest novels is *Prithivivallabh* (1928).

Rajasthani Literature

- Medieval Rajasthani literature was written with several dialects and has two main forms of fictional writing called **Dingal** and **Pingal**.
- The most famous text in this context is **Dhola Maru**.
- The writings of Mirabai in Braj have been very famous for a long time. Several other saints composed devotional poetry in this region.
- The stories of Rajasthani writers were usually oral in nature and were spread by the bards who sang **virkavya** (victory poetic songs).

Sindhi Literature

- The literature in **Sindh** has been deeply influenced by the two regions surrounding it: Rajasthan and Gujarat.
- As Sindh was always on the border of India, it was amongst the first region to come in contact with Islamic settlers in India, which also explains the influence of Islam and Sufism on Sindhi poetry. The poetry is very lyrical and meant to be sung.
- Shah Abdul Latif** (17th century) was a Sindhi Sufi mystic and poet, who is widely considered to be the greatest poet of the Sindhi language. His poems were compiled by his disciples in *Shah Jo Risalo*, published in 1866.
- Two prominent names in Sindhi literature of the 18th–19th century are **Dewan Kauromal** and **Mirza Kalich Beg**.
- Pir Nooruddin** was also a famous name in Sindhi literature. His poetic verses are known as **ginans**.



Kashmiri Literature

- The use of Kashmiri language was started by Rajanaka Shiti Kantha's work **Mahanaya-Prakasha**.
- As mentioned earlier, one of the earliest texts from Kashmir was Kalhana's **Rajatarangini** written in **Sanskrit** in the 12th century AD.
- The local people used Kashmiri, which had influences from Persian and Hindi dialects.
- In the early Medieval period when the *Bhakti* movement was at its peak, the Kashmiri language saw its first female poetess, a Shaivite mystic called **Lal Ded**.
- But the major spread happened after the coming of Islam and Sufism to Kashmir and with them several major writers, such as Sufi Ghulam Mohammad, Zinda Kaul and Mahjoor.
- Habba Khatoon** (16th century) was a Kashmiri Muslim poet and ascetic who was known as the '**Nightingale of Kashmir**'. She composed songs in Kashmiri. It is claimed that she introduced 'loal' to Kashmiri poetry, which is equivalent to the English 'lyric'.

- Another interesting person in Kashmiri literature is Noor Din, who was also known as **Nund Rishi**, and was purported to bringing Hindi and Islamic elements together in his poetry.
- With political power passing to the Dogra family in Jammu in 1846, Kashmiri has been eclipsed by the **Dogri** language. Recently, some interest has been shown in reviving the language.

Punjabi Literature

- The earliest writings in Punjabi belong to the Nath Yogi era from the 9th to the 14th century AD.
- Several regional and geographical influences have affected not only the politics of Punjab but also its literature. Punjabi literature was composed in two major scripts: Persian and Gurmukhi. One of the greatest texts of the world is the religious book of the Sikhs, the **Adi Granth**, and a majority of it is in **Gurmukhi**. It also comprises the Dohas of Kabir, Dadu and Nanak in Hindi or Braj; it is therefore a very composite text.
- Guru Gobind Singh**, who contributed to the Adi Granth, also wrote **Savaiye** (poetry) in Punjabi.
- The local literature took heavily to love stories and epics, for example, *Sohni-Mahiwal*, *Sassi-Punnu* and the very famous **Heer-Ranjha**, which was composed by **Waris Shah**. The Sufi poetry of **Baba Farid** and **Bulleh Shah** became popular with the masses as well as with the rulers of this region. They composed many songs or classical compositions called **Kafi(s)** that were usually sung by the common people.
- Modern Punjabi literature was also affected by nationalistic writing, and **Bhagat Singh's** legendary '**Rang de Basanti Chola**' is a classic example of this trend.
- There was a trend to also remember the past rulers who might have repelled the British, and Bhai Vir Singh wrote *Rana Surat Singh* keeping such sentiments in mind. Contemporary writers include Dr. Mohan Singh and Puran Singh.
- The novels, short stories and poetry of **Amrita Pritam** are examples of the experience of women, and the Partition of India. Her most famous novel is **Pinjar**.

Marathi Literature

- The journey of Marathi literature begun with the **old Yadav Dynasty**.
- 'Mahanubhav Panth' and 'Warkari Sampradaya' laid the foundation of Marathi literature and were influenced by the 'Nath Panth' (9th and 10th century).
- Mahanubhav Panth** was founded by **Sarvadnya Shri Chakradhar** Swami in 1100-1200. This cult accepted all members irrespective of their caste. These sects, through literatures, tried to describe incarnations of Gods and explain the philosophies. This in turn led to the enrichment of Marathi literature.
- Leela Charitra** is thought to be the **first biography** written in the Marathi language. It was written by **Mhaimbhat** (1278) and is a biography of Chakradhar Swami of Mahanubhava sect.

- Bhakti Saints like **Jnyaneshwar and Vitthal** sang in their local, colloquial language.
- The oldest known work in Marathi is from the 13th century by Saint **Jnaneshwar** (also known as Gyaneshwar). He is credited to begin the *kirtan* in Maharashtra and has written a detailed commentary on the *Bhagvata Gita* in Marathi.
- Apart from him, several saints like Namdev, Sena and Gora were popular from the same period. The oldest known female writer is **Janabai** (13th–14th century).
- **Namdev** wrote a great many '**Abhangas**' on devotion to God. This we may call the first or early period of Marathi literature. It extended from 1200–1350 AD.
- There was no such development in Marathi literature from the middle of the 14th century till the beginning of the 16th century.
- Saint **Eknath** was born in 1518. The seed of literary genius germinated again.
- The third period is the most brilliant period in the history of Marathi literature. It extends from the beginning of the 17th century to the close of Peshwa rule. Three great poets Ramdas, Tukaram and Mukteshwar were born.
- Saint **Tukaram**, the greatest poet in Marathi literature preached asceticism, toleration and devotion to God. He composed Abhanga poetry. **Tukaramgatha** is the Marathi language compilation of his works. He includes a discussion about the conflict between Pravritti and Nivritti, i.e., between having a Passion for life, family and business and the desire to renounce, leave everything behind and individual liberation (Moksha).
- **Ramdas** was a saint who wrote '**Dasbodh**' containing sermons on abstract as well as practical topics.
- **Mukteshwar** too by his translation of **Mahabharata** motivated the masses.
- The nationalist movement affected the Marathi poetry and prose writing. One of our greatest nationalistic figures, **Bal Gangadhar Tilak**, published his regional news paper **Kesari** in Marathi. This paper criticised the British and their policies and published tracts by leading revolutionaries of that time.
- On 6 January 1832, Balshastri Jambhekar began **Darpan**, the first Marathi-English fortnightly magazine. He is known as the **Father of Marathi Journalism**.
- Marathi prose writing took a turn for the better with the works of Hari Narayan Apte, V.S. Chiplunkar and Kesavasut. Contemporary lots of Marathi poets include M.G Ranade, G.T. Madkholkar and K.T Telang.



Nationalist Literature of India

Nationalism is closely linked with literature, which can be seen in the history of the freedom struggle of India. Beginning with the 19th century, nationalist ideas began to emerge, and writings in several Indian languages started to flourish, with many litterateurs writing on topics of national interest.

Some literary works associated with nationalism and socio-religious reforms are as follows:

- **Bankim Chandra Chatterjee**, the famous novelist, started a journal *Bangadarshan* to educate and raise awareness amongst the common people. The magazine had a defining influence on the emergence of a Bengali identity and the genesis of nationalism in Bengal. His novel *Anand Math* inspired the youth to take part in nationalist activities.
- **Rabindranath Tagore** enunciated his interpretation of nationalism by associating it with humanity and emphasised the importance of achieving 'freedom of mind' through his novels such as *Gora* and *Ghare Baire*. Our national anthem, *Jana Gana Mana*, exuberates the nationalistic fervour produced by his writings.
- **Bharatendu Harischandra** used poetry to raise a sense of patriotism amongst the public. His plays *Andher Nagari* and *Bharat Durdasha* highlighted the oppressive character of British rule.
- **Dadabhai Naoroji** wrote the book *Poverty and Un-British Rule* in India and enunciated his theory of the 'Drain of Wealth' from India to Britain. This marked the beginning of economic critique in nationalism.
- **R.C. Dutt** enunciated economic nationalism by exposing the exploitations by the British in his book *The Economic History of India*. He also wrote four historical novels prompted by what he called as 'literary patriotism'.

Why I am an Atheist, an essay, was written by Bhagat Singh in Lahore Central Jail to propagate his ideas of nationalism amongst the common people.

- Books such as *The Indian Struggle* by Subhas Chandra Bose, *The Discovery of India* by Jawaharlal Nehru and *The Indian War of Independence* by V.D. Savarkar had been instrumental in raising a sense of patriotism amongst educated Indians.
- **Mahatma Gandhi** translated Sanskrit hymns and melodies into English in the book called *Songs from Prison*. Gandhi completed these translations during his stay in Yeravda Jail in 1930.



Indian English Literature

Indian English Literature (IEL) is the body of work by writers in India who write in the English language but whose native or co-native language could be one of the numerous languages of India. Indian writing in English was a corollary of exposure of Indians to British education system during the British rule in India. The first example of published English writing by an Indian is the travel narrative of Sake Dean Mahomet called ***The Travels of Dean Mahomet*** in 1794 AD. However, this work falls between the category of non-fiction and travelogue.

Rajmohan's Wife, written by Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay in 1864, is the first Indian novel written in English. **Bianca, or The Young Spanish Maiden** (1878) by Toru Dutt was the first novel written by an Indian woman.

Early notable poets writing in English in India include **Derozio, Michael Madhusudan Dutt, Toru Dutt, Romesh Chunder Dutt, Sri Aurobindo** and **Sarojini Naidu**. Writers like **R. K. Narayan, Mulk Raj Anand** and **Raja Rao** contributed to the growth and popularity of Indian English fiction in the 1930s. In the 19th and early 20th century, the speeches of **Swami Vivekananda, Rabindranath Tagore, Chittaranjan Das, Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Mahatma Gandhi** and **Subhas Chandra Bose**, to name only a few, shaped the destiny of modern India and also the destiny of English language in India.

Among later Indian English writers, some notable names are **Salman Rushdie, Anita Desai, Arundhati Roy, Vikram Seth, Rohinton Mistry** and **Shashi Tharoor**.

Dalit Literature

Some of the famous writers of Dalit Literature are **Shree Narayana Guru, Jyotiba Phule, Namdev Dhasal, Naryan Surve, Daya Pawar** and **Laxman Gaikwad** who wrote in Marathi, and **Mahadev Devanur** who wrote in Kannada.

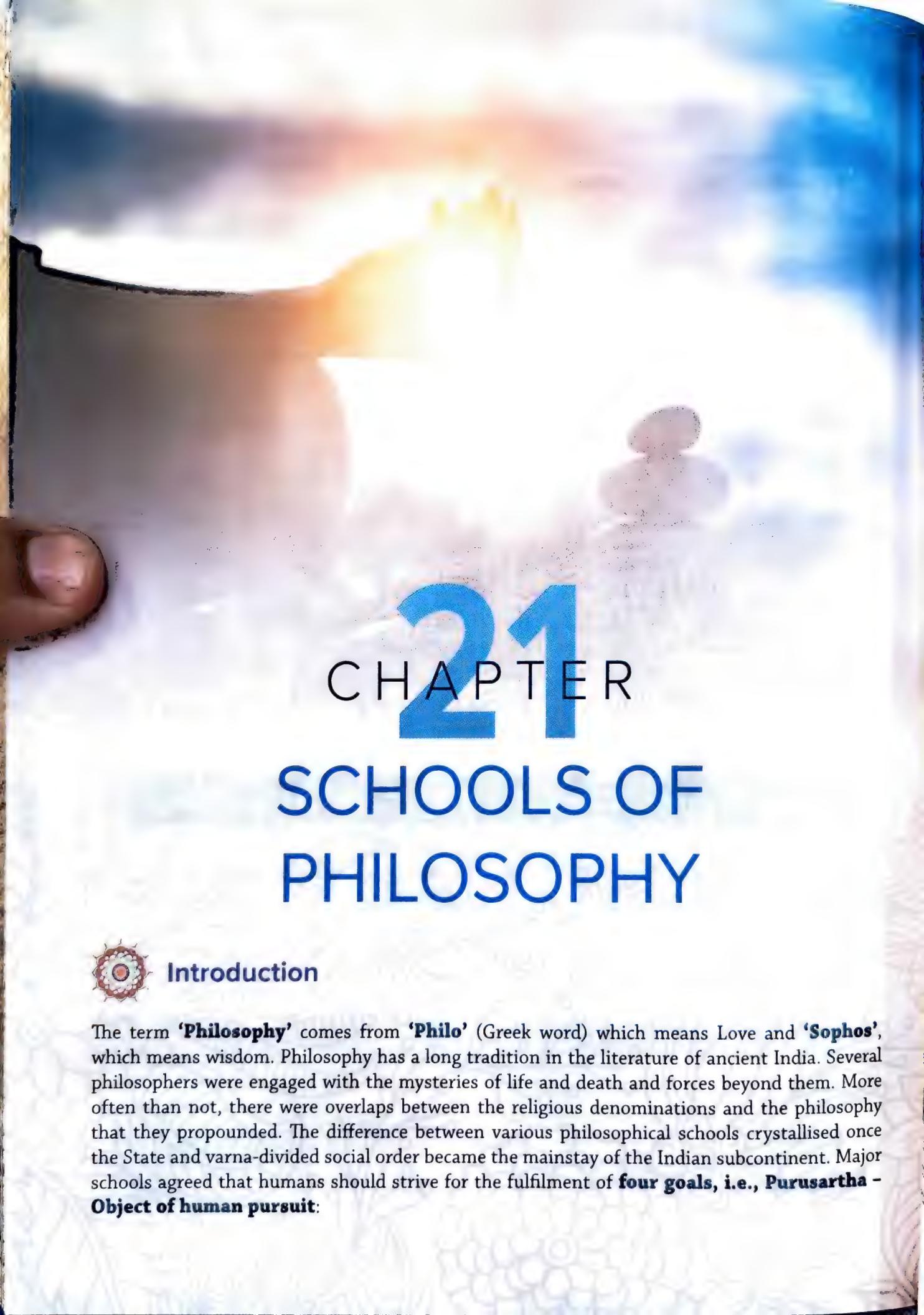
Subramaniya Bharathi – Mahakavi Bharathiyar

- **C. Subramaniya Bharathi (Bharathi) (1882–1921)** was a poet, journalist, freedom fighter and social reformer from Tamil Nadu. He was known as **Mahakavi Bharathiyar**, and he is considered one of India's greatest poets. His songs on nationalism and freedom of India helped to rally the masses to support the Indian Independence Movement in Tamil Nadu.
- A new age in Tamil literature began with his works. Bharathi was essentially a lyrical poet. Most parts of his compositions are short lyrical outpourings on patriotic, devotional and mystic themes. **Kannan Pattu, Nilavum Vanminum Katrum, Paanchali Sabadham, Kuyil Pattu** are some of his poems.
- Bharathi is considered a national poet because a number of his poems were of the patriotic flavour, and through which he exhorted people to join the independence struggle and work vigorously for the liberation of the country. Instead of merely being proud of his country, he also outlined his vision for a free India.
- He published the sensational '**Sudesa Geethangal**' in 1908.
- In order to proclaim its revolutionary ardour, he printed the weekly newspaper named **India** in red paper. It was the first paper in Tamil Nadu to publish political cartoons. He also published and edited a few other journals, for example, **Vijaya**.

CHAPTER SUMMARY

- **Literature** – any form of writing that has some literary merit – classified broadly into fiction and non-fiction.
- **Vedas** – knowledge on how to conduct the entirety of one's life – divided into four major parts – *Rig Veda*, *Yajur Veda*, *Sama Veda* and *Atharva Veda* – compiled around 1500–1000 BC. Vedas are also believed to be **Apaurusheya**, which means not a creation of human.
- **Rig Veda** – the oldest amongst the four Vedas – Lord Indra is the chief deity – consists of 1028 hymns – hymns concentrate on the themes of life, death, creation, sacrifice and seeking godly pleasure.
- **Yajur Veda** – concentrates on the rites and mantras of different types of sacrifices – consists of two major samhitas – Shukla (white/pure) and Krishna (black/dark).
- **Sama Veda** – concentrates on melody or songs – contains 1875 hymns – also known as the Book of Chants – sheds light on the development of Indian music in the Vedic Period.
- **Atharva Veda** – also known as Brahma Veda – concerned with the peace and prosperity of human society and covers all aspects of man's daily life – discusses black and white magic.
- Rig Veda, Sama Veda and Yajur Veda are collectively known as **Traji** or **Trayi Vidya** (meaning Triple science).
- **Brahmanas** – associated with the Vedas – a collection of texts with commentaries on each Veda – explain the symbolic significance of sacred words.
- **Aranyakas** – describe the philosophy behind the rituals and sacrifices involved in the Vedas – each Veda has an accompanying Aranyaka.
- **Upanishads** – there are more than 200 known Upanishads – 108 of them are called Muktika Canon – treatises written in Sanskrit – talk about the abstract, spiritual, material and philosophical quests of man.
- **Puranas** – consist of narrative stories about the creation of the universe – the 18 major Puranas are called *Mahapuranas* – anecdotes about post-Vedic social, cultural and religious lifestyle.
- **Buddhist literature can be classified into canonical and non-canonical** – available in Sanskrit and Pali.
- **Buddhist canonical literature** – written in Pali – consists of Tripitaka – *Vinaya Pitaka* (rules and regulations which should be followed by Buddhist monks and nuns) – *Sutta Pitaka* (dialogues and speeches of Buddha which deal with morality and righteous dharma) – *Abhidhamma Pitaka* (philosophy and metaphysics).
- **Buddhist non-canonical literature** – available in both Sanskrit and Pali – the Jatakas are the best example – stories from the previous births of Buddha – *Buddhacharita* by Asvaghosha is an example of Sanskrit Buddhist literature.
- **Jain literature can be classified as canonical and non-canonical** – available in several languages, including Sanskrit, Prakrit, Ardhamagadhi, and Tamil.
- **Jain canonical literature is also known as the Agamas or Angas** – compiled by the Ganadharas, who were the chief disciples of Mahavira. Non-canonical literature in Jainism includes various texts called the Niruyktis and Samhitas which were written by Bhadrabahu.
- **Sikh literature** – beliefs and philosophies of Sikhism are written in the sacred scripture called the *Guru Granth Sahib* – the composition and hymns of the Sikh Gurus are called *Gurbani*.

- ★ **Adi Granth** – compiled by Bhai Gurdas in 1604 under the aegis of Guru Arjan Dev – further expanded in 1678 under Guru Gobind Singh and known to be the Guru Granth Sahib.
- ★ **Dravidian literature** – comprises four major Dravidian languages – Tamil, Kannada, Telugu and Malayalam – Tamil is the oldest and supposedly very close to Sanskrit. Kannada is the second oldest language.
- ★ **Medieval literature emerged during the period of the Delhi Sultanate and Mughals** – prominent use of Persian – witnessed the development of Hindi from the ancient Apabhramsa language.
- ★ **Hindi evolved between the 7th and 14th century** – got its biggest boost with the Bhakti movement – Prithviraj Raso was probably the first Hindi book – the bulk of literary works can be seen from Kabir, Tulsidas, Surdas and Mirabai.
- ★ Modern trend in literature is represented by **Dalit and Nationalist Literature**.



21 CHAPTER SCHOOLS OF PHILOSOPHY

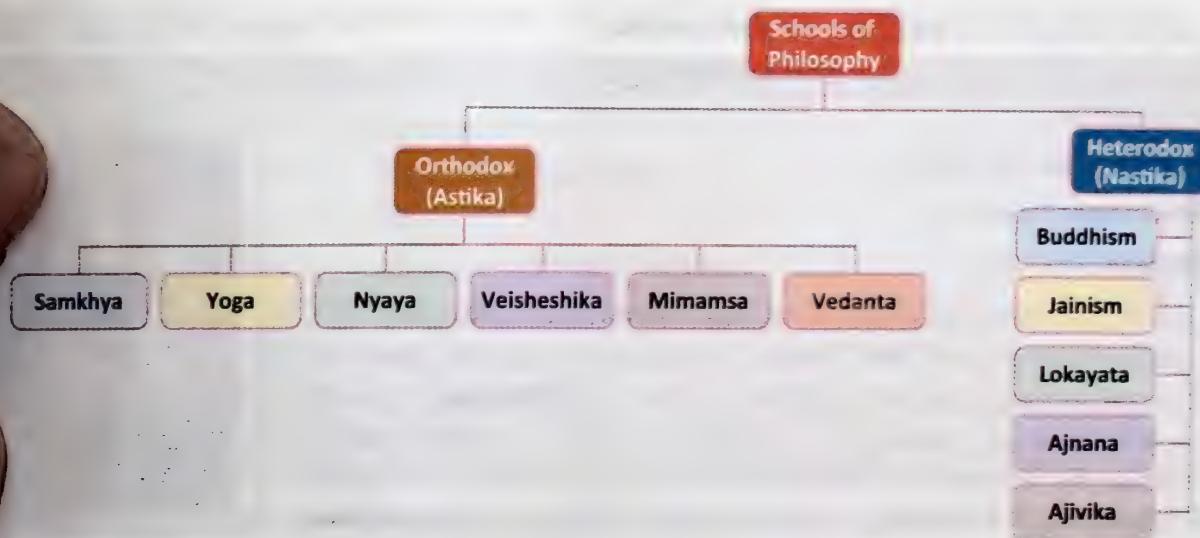


Introduction

The term '**Philosophy**' comes from '**Philo**' (Greek word) which means Love and '**Sophos**', which means wisdom. Philosophy has a long tradition in the literature of ancient India. Several philosophers were engaged with the mysteries of life and death and forces beyond them. More often than not, there were overlaps between the religious denominations and the philosophy that they propounded. The difference between various philosophical schools crystallised once the State and varna-divided social order became the mainstay of the Indian subcontinent. Major schools agreed that humans should strive for the fulfilment of **four goals, i.e., Purusartha** - **Object of human pursuit**:

Goals for Life	Meaning	Treatise on the Goal
Artha	Economic means or wealth	Matters related to the economy were discussed in <i>Arthashastra</i> .
Dharma	Regulation of social orders	Matters related to the State were discussed in the <i>Dharmashastra</i> .
Kama	Physical pleasures or love	The <i>Kamasutra</i> were written to elaborate on sexual pleasure.
Moksha	Salvation	There are several texts dealing with salvation in the <i>Darshanas</i> or schools of philosophy.

Even though everyone propounded these four to be the goals that a person should strive for. The main aim of life was to achieve deliverance from the constant circle of life and death. Slowly there were differences amongst some schools about the means to achieve salvation, and by the beginning of the Christian Era, two different schools of philosophy were in ascension. These schools were the following:



Orthodox School

This school believed that the **Vedas were the supreme revealed scriptures** that hold the secrets to salvation. The proponents did **not** question the *authenticity of the Vedas*. There were six sub-schools that were called the **Shada Darshanas: Samkhya, Yoga, Nyaya, Vaisheshika, Mimamsa and Vedanta**.

Samkhya School

This is the oldest school of philosophy and was founded by *Kapil Muni*, who is supposed to have written the **Samkhya Sutra**. The word 'Samkhya' or 'Sankhya' literally means 'count'. This school went through two phases of development:

Original Samkhya View

This view is considered to be the early Samkhya philosophy and dates around **1st century AD**.

The proponents believed that the presence of any divine agency was **not necessary** for the creation of the universe.

They propounded a rational and **scientific view** of the creation of the universe.

They also argued that the world owed its existence to nature or **prakriti**.

This view is considered to belong to a **materialistic school** of philosophy.

New Samkhya View

This view emerged when newer elements merged with the older Samkhya view during the **4th century AD**.

The proponents argued that along with the element of nature, **purusha or spirit was necessary** for the creation of the universe.

They propounded a **spiritual view** of the creation of the universe.

They argued that the coming together of nature and spiritual elements created the world.

This view is considered to belong to a **more spiritual school** of philosophy.

Both the schools argued that salvation could be attained through the acquisition of **knowledge**. Lack of knowledge is supposed to be the root cause for the misery of man.

This school believed in **dualism or dvaitavada**, i.e., *the soul and the matter are separate entities*. This concept is the basis of all **real knowledge**. This knowledge can be acquired through three main concepts:

- **Pratyaksha:** Perception
- **Anumana:** Inference
- **Shabda:** Hearing

This school has been famous for its scientific system of inquiry. The final philosophy argued that **Prakriti** and **Purusha** are the basis of reality and they are absolute and independent. As **Purusha** is closer to the attributes of a **man**, it is associated with the consciousness and cannot be changed or altered. This consciousness is the basis of all knowledge. Knowledge can be acquired through **Pratyaksha** (Perception), **Anumana** (Inference) and **Shabda** (Hearing).

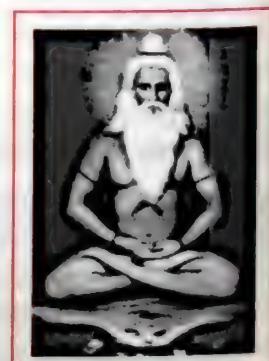
Conversely, **Prakriti** consists of **three major attributes**: thought, movement and transformation. Prakriti is also a state of equilibrium of three gunas (attributes), namely, **Sattva** (Calmness), **Rajas** (Activities) and **Tamas** (Passivity and Negativity).



Kapil Muni

Yoga School

Yoga literally means union of the individual spirit and the universal spirit, and the Yoga School postulates the **union of two major entities**. They argue that human beings can achieve salvation by combining **meditation** and **physical application** of yogic techniques. It is argued that these techniques lead to the **release of Purusha from the Prakriti**, which would eventually lead to salvation. This finally leads to self-control (Sanyama) and annihilation of mind or achieving a state of oneness of mind (Samadhi). This origin of Yoga and the school has been expounded in the **Yogasutra** of **Patanjali** that is tentatively dated to the 2nd century BC. Vasya's *Yogabhasya* and Vachaspati's *Tattva-vaisaradi* are important treatise in this field.



Yoga Posture

The physical aspect of this school deals primarily with exercises in various postures, which are also called **asanas**. There are several types of breathing exercises that are called **pranayams**. To achieve Samadhi, one must practise '**Ashtanga Yoga**' consisting of eight practices. The other means of achieving *mukti* or freedom are the following:

Means of Achieving Freedom	Meanings/Ways of Achieving It
Yama	Practising self-control
Niyama	Observation of the rules governing one's life
Pratyahara	Choosing an object
Dharna	Fixing the mind (over the chosen object)
Dhyana	Concentrating on the (above-mentioned) chosen object
Samadhi	It is the merging of the mind and the object and that leads to the final dissolution of the self

By practising Ashtanga Yoga, one can achieve Ashtasiddhis (Super Human Powers) such as:

Ashtasiddhi	Details
Anima	Power to assume miniature forms
Mahima	Power to enlarge one's size
Garima	Power to grow heavy
Laghima	Power to become light or weightless
Prapti	Capacity to obtain rare commodities
Prakamya	Having a strong, invincible will
Isitva	Mastery over body and five senses; capacity to create or destroy outside objects
Vasitva	Attracting various objects or controlling the movement of the objects

The Yoga School favours these techniques as they help individuals to **control their mind, body and sensory organs**. The followers propound that these exercises can help if one believes in the existence of God as a guide, mentor and teacher. They would help the individual to move away from worldly matters and achieve the concentration required to attain salvation.

Comparison between the Samkhya and Yoga Schools

Similarities

Liberation can be attained through the knowledge involving the power to control body, mind and intellect. Both the schools accept three pramans such as Perception (Pratyaksha), Inference (Anumana) and Hearing (Shabda).

Differences

The Samkhya school emphasises on self-realisation by attainment of knowledge whereas the Yoga school follows a more practical path. The Samkhya school accepts multiple Purusha whereas the Yoga school accepts only one Purusha known as the 'Supreme Self'.

Nyaya School

As the name of the school suggests, the proponents believe in the technique of **logical thinking** to achieve salvation. They consider life, death and salvation to be like mysteries that can be solved through logical and analytical thinking. This school of thought was supposed to be founded by **Akṣapāda Gautama** who is also identified as the author of the **Nyaya Sutras**.

The school argues that by using logical tools such as **inference, hearing and analogy**, an individual could verify the truth of a proposition or statement.

It believes that God not only created the universe but also sustained and destroyed it. This philosophy constantly stressed on **systematic reasoning and thinking**. The world is created by four eternal atoms, viz. space, time, mind and soul, and the God is beyond these elements.

Vaisheshika School

The Vaisheshika School believes in the **physicality of the universe**, offering a realistic and objective philosophy that governs the universe. **Kanada** who wrote the basic text governing the Vaisheshika philosophy is often considered the founder of this school. The proponents argue that everything in the universe was created by the **four eternal elements: time, space, self and mind** and **five non-eternal elements: fire, air, water, earth and ether (sky)**. These material elements are also called **Dravya**. They also argue that reality has many categories, for example, action, attribute, genus, inherence, substance and distinct quality.

The school has a very scientific approach and developed the **atomic theory**, i.e., all material objects are made of atoms. Its proponents explain the phenomenon of this universe by arguing that the atoms and molecules combined to make matter, which is the basis for everything that can be physically touched or seen. This school was also responsible for the beginning of **physics** in the Indian sub-continent. They are considered to be the propounders of the mechanical process of the formation of this Universe.

- ✿ On the subject of God, even though the proponents support scientific thinking, they **believe in God** and consider him the guiding force.
- ✿ The non-eternal elements are perceived by the Panchendriya or five organs, viz. the eye, nose, tongue, ear and skin.
- ✿ They also believe that the **laws of karma guide this universe**, i.e., everything is based on the actions of human beings. We are rewarded or punished according to our actions.
- ✿ God decides the merits and the demerits of our actions and individuals are sent to heaven or hell accordingly.
- ✿ They also believed in salvation, but it was parallel to the creation and destruction of the Universe, which was a cyclic process and was decided by the wishes of God.



Maharshi Kanada

Mimamsa School

The word 'Mimamsa' literally means the art of **reasoning, interpretation and application**. This school focuses on the analysis of the texts of *Samhita* and *Brahmana* which are portions of the Vedas. The proponents argue that the **Vedas contain the eternal truth** and they are the repositories of all knowledge. The Vedas are 'Apaurusheya' (not man-made). If one has to attain religious merit and acquire heaven and salvation, one would have to **fulfil all the duties** which are **prescribed by the Vedas**.

The texts that describe the Mimamsa philosophy in detail are the *Sutras* of **Jaimini**, which were supposedly composed in the 3rd century BC. Further inroads into the philosophy were made by two of its greatest proponents: **Sabar Swami** and **Kumarila Bhatta**.

They argue that salvation is possible through **performing rituals** but it is also necessary to understand the justification and reasoning behind Vedic rituals. It was necessary to understand this reasoning if one wanted to perform the rituals perfectly as it would allow one to attain salvation. People's actions were responsible for their merits and demerits, and a person would enjoy the bliss of heaven as long as their meritorious acts lasted. But they would **not be free** of the **cycle of life and death**. Once they achieve salvation, they would be able to break free from this unending cycle.



Rishi Jaimini

The Purva-Mimamsa Sastra has twelve qualities (Dwadasha Lakshani). They are:

Qualities (Dwadasha Lakshani)	Meaning
Pramana	Proof and means of knowledge
Karmabhedha	A particular act or item in the performance
Sesha	Residue; what remains at the end
Arthachinta	To communicate an idea from one person to another
Krama	Progressing step-by-step, a position taken, comparison
Adhikara	An initiator
Athidesa (Samanya)	Generality; since there is plurality of substances, there will be commonality
Visheshathidesa	A special quality that helps in distinguishing from other substances
Uha	Speculation
Badha	Putting an obstacle during argument
Tantra	Trickery
Avapa	Throwing and scattering ideas with hostile intent

The **main focus** of this philosophy was on the **ritualistic aspect of the Vedas**, i.e., to achieve salvation, one has to perform the **Vedic rituals**. As most humans did not understand the rituals properly, they would have to take the **assistance of the priests**. Therefore, this philosophy

inherently legitimised the social distance between the various classes. This was used as a device by the **Brahmans** to maintain their clout over people and they continued to dominate the social hierarchy.

Vedanta School

Vedanta is made up of two words – 'Veda' and 'ant', i.e., the **end of the Vedas**. This school upholds the philosophies of life as elaborated in the **Upanishads**. The oldest text that formed the basis of this philosophy was **Brahmasutra** of **Badrayana**. The philosophy propounds that **Brahm** is the reality of life and everything else is unreal or **maya**.

Furthermore, the *atma* or the consciousness of self is similar to the *brahm*. This argument **equalises atma and brahm** and if a person attains the **knowledge of the self**, the person would automatically understand *brahm* and achieve salvation.

This argument would make *brahm* and *atma indestructible* and eternal. There were social implications of this philosophy, i.e., that true spirituality was also implicit in the unchanging social and material situation into which a person is born and placed.

But this philosophy evolved in the 9th century AD through the philosophical intervention of **Adi Shankaracharya**, who wrote commentaries on the Upanishads and the Bhagavad Gita. His changes led to the development of **Advaita Vedanta**. Another major philosopher of this school was **Ramanuja**, who wrote in the 12th century AD. His intervention led to some differences in the Vedanta school:

Shankaracharya's View	Ramanuja's View
He considers brahm to be without any attributes.	He considers brahm to possess certain attributes.
He considers knowledge or <i>jnana/gyan</i> to be the main means of attaining salvation	He considers loving faith and practising devotion as the path to attain salvation

The Vedanta theory also gave credence to the *Theory of Karma*. The proponents believed in the theory of **punarjanma** or rebirth. They also argued that a person would have to bear the brunt of their actions from the previous birth in the present one. This philosophy would also allow people to argue that sometimes they suffer in their present birth because of a misdeed of the past and the remedy is beyond their means except through the finding of their *brahm*.

Sub-schools of Vedanta

Sub-school	Chief Exponent	Details
Advaita (Monism or Non-dualism)	Adi Shankaracharya (8th century AD)	It is the oldest extant sub-school of Vedānta which emphasises <i>Jivanmukti</i> , the idea that moksha (liberation) is achievable in this life in contrast to other Indian philosophies that emphasise <i>videhamukti</i> , or moksha after death. The goal in <i>Advaita</i> is to gain self-knowledge and complete understanding of the identity of Atman and Brahman. Correct knowledge of Atman and Brahman leads to dissolution of all dualistic tendencies and then finally to liberation (moksha).

Sub-school	Chief Exponent	Details
Vishishtadvaita (Qualified Monism or Qualified Non-dualism)	Ramanuja (11–12th century AD)	It relates to non-dualism of the qualified whole, in which Brahman alone is seen as the Supreme Reality , but is characterised by multiplicity. According to this sub-school "all diversity subsumes to an underlying unity".
Shiv-Advaita (Shaivite Qualified Non-dualism)	Srikanta Sivacharya (12th century AD)	It states that Shiva and Brahma are one and the same .
Dvaita (Dualism)	Madhavacharya (1238–1317 AD)	As per this school, there lies a fundamental difference between Atman (individual soul) and Brahman (ultimate reality or God Vishnu).
Dvaitadvaita (Differential Monism or Dualistic Non-dualism)	Nimbaraka (13th century AD)	According to this philosophy, humans are both different and non-different from God.
Shuddh-Advaita (Pure Non-dualism)	Vallabhacharya (1479–1531 AD)	According to this, God and Soul are not distinct, but one. The followers of this school belong to Pushtimarg Sampradaya . For the followers of the sect, Shrinathji Temple at Nathdwara (Rajasthan) and the compositions of eight poets (aṣṭāchāp) are central to the worship by the followers of the sect.
Achintya Bheda Abheda (Inconceivable oneness and difference)	Chaitanya Mahaprabhu (1486–1534)	This Vedanta sub-school was followed by Gaudiya Vaishnavas . The school is understood as an integration of the strict dualist (dvaita) theology of Madhvacharya and the qualified monism (Vishishtadvaita) of Ramanuja. According to this school, the supreme lord and individual soul are simultaneously one and different. ISKCON follows this philosophy.

Prasthanatrayi

In **Vedanta Philosophy**, the **Upanishads**, the **Bhagavad Gita** and the **Brahma Sutras** are considered to be the primary sources of knowledge. These **three texts together are called the Prasthanatrayi**.
(*Upanishads, Bhagavad Gita and Brahma Sutras are explained in Chapter 20.*)

Comparative Analysis of Different Schools of Thought

S.No.	Treatise on Vedanta (Upanishad)	Author	Evolved Philosophy	Way of Salvation
1.	Samkhya Sutra	Kapila	Samkhya	By acquisition of knowledge
2.	Yoga Sutra	Patanjali	Yoga	By meditation and physical activity
3.	Nyaya Sutra	Gautama	Nyaya	By logical thinking
4.	Vaisheshika Sutra	Kanad	Vaisheshika	By having knowledge of eternal and substances
5.	Mimamsa Sutras	Jaimini	Mimamsa	By performing Vedic sacrifices
6.	Vedanta Sutras	Badrayana	Vedanta	By having knowledge of Parmatma

Swami Vivekananda's contribution to Culture and Philosophy

According to Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, “*Swamiji harmonized the East and the West, the religion and science, the past and the present. And that is why he is great. Our countrymen have gained unprecedented self-respect, self-reliance and self-assertion from his teachings.*”

Swami Vivekananda, as a spiritual scientist, wandered all over India, saw the abject poverty and backwardness of the masses and understood the cause of India's downfall.

He addressed the **World's Parliament of Religions** held in **Chicago (USA)** in **1893**. He made the Western intelligentsia to recognise the great culture and tradition India had and became the “*Messenger of Indian wisdom to the Western world*”. He was able to build a bridge between Indian and Western culture and end the cultural isolation of India. The Indian masses were given a proper understanding of the great spiritual heritage of the country.

Swami Vivekananda founded the **Ramakrishna Mission** in **1897**. Their monks propagate practical Vedanta, undertake various forms of social services and conduct relief and rehabilitation work during natural calamities.



Heterodox School

The proponents **do not believe** in the originality of the Vedas and **questioned the existence of God**. They are divided into five major sub-schools: **Buddhism, Jainism, Lokayata, Ajnana and Ajivika**.

1. Buddhist philosophy (explained in Chapter 19)
2. Jain philosophy (explained in Chapter 19)
3. Ajnana (explained in Chapter 17)
4. Ajivika (explained in Chapter 17)
5. Charvaka school or Lokayata philosophy

Charvaka School or Lokayata Philosophy

Brihaspati is considered the founder of this school, which is supposed to be one of the earliest schools to develop a philosophical theory. The philosophy is old enough to find mention in the Vedas and the **Brihadaranyka** Upanishad. The Charvaka school was the main propounder of the **materialistic view to achieve salvation**. As it was geared towards the common people, the philosophy was soon dubbed as **Lokayata** or something derived from the *common people*.

The word 'Lokayata' also means a keen attachment to the physical and material world (*loka*). The proponents argued for a complete disregard of any world beyond the world that



Charvaka School

is inhabited by a person. They denied the existence of any supernatural or divine agent who could regulate our conduct on earth. They argued **against the need to achieve salvation** and also denied the existence of *brahm* and God. They believed in anything that could be touched and be experienced by the human senses. Some of their main teachings are the following:

- ◆ They argued against Gods and their representatives on the earth – the priestly class. They argued that a Brahman manufactures false rituals so as to acquire gifts (*dakshina*) from the followers.
- ◆ Man is the centre of all activities and he should enjoy himself as long as he lives. He should consume all earthly goods and indulge in sensual pleasure.
- ◆ The Charvakas do not consider '**ether**' as one of the five essential elements because it cannot be experienced through perception. Hence, they say that the Universe consists of **only four elements**: fire, earth, water and air.
- ◆ This school argues that there is no other world after this one, hence death is the end of a human being and pleasure should be the ultimate objective of life. Hence, they propounded the theory of '**eat, drink and be merry**'.

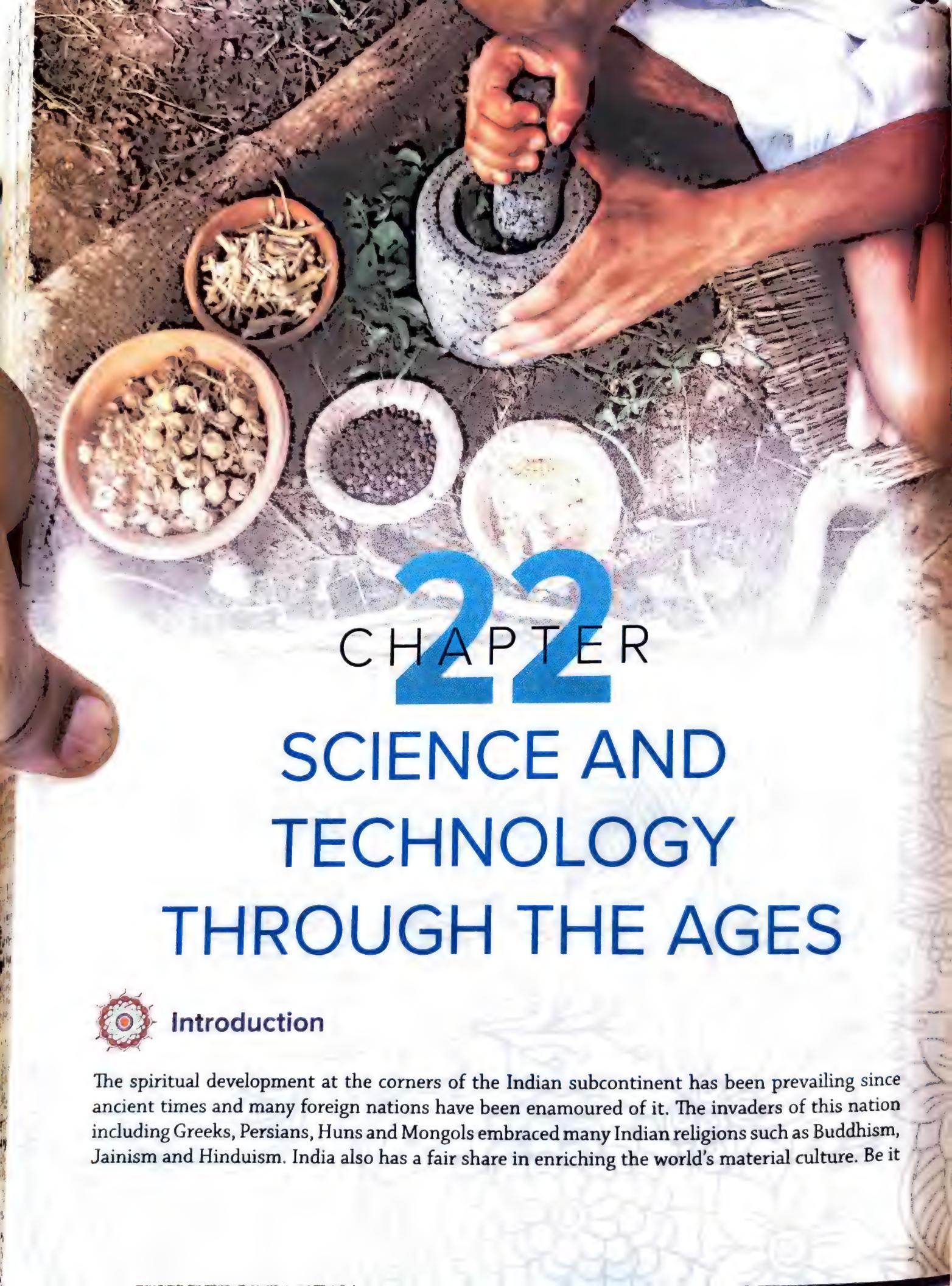
The western philosophers often criticise that the Indian philosophical systems neglected practical sciences. But, Charvaka texts incorporated modern ideas like physicalism, behaviourism, materialism, etc. In fact, the basic tenet of Charvaka philosophy states that the ruling classes conspired to shackle less fortunate people with religious bondage. It shows a striking similarity between the Charvaka philosophy and the ideology of Communism.

Baul: A Different Mystic Philosophy

- Bauls are wandering mystic minstrels from West Bengal, Assam, Tripura and Bangladesh. The origin of the Bauls is not clear, but the word can be found in **Chaitanya Charitamrita** written by Krishnadasa Kaviraja. They have great significant influence on the culture of Bengal. Rabindranath Tagore was also influenced by their songs and lifestyle. Baul songs are listed under **UNESCO's Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity** (however under country Bangladesh and not India).
- They are from the musical communities and their main occupation is the propagation of Baul music. They can be identified by their clothes, uncut hair style and unique musical instruments. Musical instruments of the Bauls include the ektara, dotara, dhol, dugi, ghungur, nupur, bamboo flute, etc.
- Their communities consist of different sects, and they are influenced by Vaishnavism, Hindu Tantrism, Buddhism and Sufism. Ways of achieving salvation, spirit of life and religious thoughts are all mystically expressed in their music. Famous Baul saints and singers include Fakir Lalol Shah, Bhaba Pagla, Shah Abdul Karim, Purna Das Baul, etc.

CHAPTER SUMMARY

- **Purusartha** – object of human pursuit – refers to four goals of human life, namely artha, dharma, kama and moksha.
- **Orthodox school** – Vedas were the supreme revealed scriptures – six sub-schools: Samkhya, Yoga, Nyaya, Vaisheshika, Mimamsa and Vedanta.
- **Samkhya** – oldest school of philosophy – founded by Kapil Muni – salvation through knowledge – purusha is associated with consciousness – Prakriti is associated with thought, movement and transformation.
- **Yoga** – salvation by combining meditation and physical application of yogic techniques – release of Purusha from Prakriti – expounded in Yogasutra of Patanjali – deals with asanas and pranayams.
- **Nyaya** – mysteries of life, death and salvation can be solved through logical and analytical thinking – founded by Akṣapāda Gautama (author of Nyaya Sutra).
- **Vaisheshika** – physicality of the universe with five main elements – fire, water, air, earth and ether (sky) – laws of karma guide the universe.
- **Mimamsa** – detailed description in the Sutras of Rishi Jaimini – reasoning, interpretation and application – Vedas contain the eternal truth – focused on the ritualistic part of the Vedas.
- **Vedanta** – based on Brahma sutra of Badrayana – brahm is the reality and everything else is unreal/ maya – Shankaracharya and Ramanuja were the prominent figures – believed in the theory of *punarjanma*.
- **Heterodox school** – questioned the existence of God – five sub-schools: Buddhism, Jainism, Lokayata, Ajnana and Ajivika.
- **Lokayata** – also known as Charvaka – founded by Brihaspati – mentioned in *Brihadaranyakya* which is linked to Shukla Yajurveda – keen attachment to the physical and material world – eat, drink and be merry.



CHAPTER 22

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY THROUGH THE AGES



Introduction

The spiritual development at the corners of the Indian subcontinent has been prevailing since ancient times and many foreign nations have been enamoured of it. The invaders of this nation including Greeks, Persians, Huns and Mongols embraced many Indian religions such as Buddhism, Jainism and Hinduism. India also has a fair share in enriching the world's material culture. Be it

distillation of perfumes, the making of dyes, the extraction of sugar, the weaving of cotton and even the techniques of algebra and algorithm, the concept of zero, the technique of surgery, the concepts of atom and relativity, the herbal system of medicine, the technique of alchemy, the smelting of metals, the game of Chess, martial art and Karate, etc. can be found in ancient India and evidences indicate that they might have originated here.

This points to the fact that India carries a *rich legacy* of scientific ideas. This chapter discusses the various areas of contribution by scientists from various parts of India.



Mathematics

Also called *Ganita* by the general name, it includes:

- **Arithmetic** (Pattin Ganita/Anka Ganita)
- **Algebra** (Bija Ganita)
- **Geometry** (Rekha Ganita)
- **Astronomy** (Khagolshastra)
- **Astrology** (Jyotisa)

Between 1000 BC and 1000 AD, a number of treatises on mathematics were authored by Indian mathematicians, which relate to the above-mentioned areas. The techniques of algebra and the concept of zero probably originated in India.

The **town planning of Harappa** indicates that the people in those times had a good knowledge of measurement and geometry. The use of geometric patterns can also be found in the temples in the form of geometrical motifs.

Bijaganita means 'the other mathematics' as the word *Bija* means 'another' or 'second' and *Ganita* means mathematics. The fact that this name was chosen for this system of computation implies that it was recognised as a **parallel system of computation**, different from the conventional one which was used since long and was till then the only one. It led to the view of the existence of mathematics in the Vedic literature which was also shorthand method of computation.

The earliest book on mathematics was ***Shulbasutra*** written by Baudhayana around 6th century BC. There is a mention of formula for the square root of 2 and even some concepts very similar to **Pythagorean Theorem** in the *Shulbasutra*. It also contains geometry related to fire altar construction.

Apastamba, in the **2nd century BC**, introduced the concepts of **practical geometry** involving **acute angles, obtuse angles** and **right angles**. This knowledge of angles helped in the constructions of **fire altars** in those times.

Aryabhata (476–550 AD)

Aryabhata around **499 AD** wrote *Aryabhatiya* in which the concepts of mathematics as well as astronomy were explicitly mentioned. The book written in Sanskrit had **four sections**:

1. **Gitikapada** – presents large units of time, e.g. Kalpa, Yuga.
2. **Ganitapada** - covers mensuration, arithmetic, geometry, etc.
3. **Kalakriyapada** – determines position of planets, etc.
4. **Golapada** – earth's shape, cause behind day and night, features of ecliptic, etc.

Astronomy was also called *khagol shastra* in those days. *Khagol* was the famous astronomical laboratory in Nalanda (Bihar) where Aryabhata studied.

In Aryabhata's book, the aims of studying astronomy were:

- To get the accuracy of calendars
- To know about the climate and rainfall patterns
- Navigation
- To look at the horoscope
- To understand about the **tides** and **stars**. This helped in crossing deserts and seas by indicating the direction during night times.

Aryabhata in his book stated that the **Earth is round** and **rotates** on its own axis. He formulated the **area of a triangle** and discovered **algebra**. The value of Pi given by Aryabhata is much more accurate than that given by the Greeks.

The *Jyotisa* part of *Aryabhatiya* also deals with astronomical definitions, method of determining the true **position of the planets**, movement of the **Sun** and the **Moon** and the calculation of the **eclipses**. In his book, the reasons for the eclipses given are that lunar eclipse occurs when the shadow of the Earth falls on the Moon while rotating on its own axis, and when the Moon's shadow falls on the Earth, it results in solar eclipse. However, the **orthodox theory** previously explained that it was a process where the demon swallowed the planet. Thus, we can say that Aryabhata's theories were a distinct departure from the orthodox theories of astrology and it stressed on scientific explanations than on beliefs.

It is to be noted that Arabs called mathematics '**Hindisat**' or the Indian art which was learnt by them from India. The whole Western world is indebted to India in this respect.



Brahmagupta (598–668 AD)

Brahmagupta (7th century AD) in his book *Brahmasputa Siddhanta* mentioned **Zero as a number**. In his book, he also introduced **negative numbers** and described them as debts and **positive numbers** as fortunes. It also contained first clear description of **Quadratic formula**.

The Concept of Zero

'Zero' or *Shunya* is derived from the concept of a void. The concept of void existed in Hindu Philosophy hence the derivation of a symbol for it. The concept of *Shunya* influenced South-East Asian culture through the Buddhist concept of *Nirvana* (attaining salvation) by merging into the void of eternity.



Aryabhata

In the 8th-9th century AD, there was a famous **Persian** polymath **Al-Khwarizmi** who produced vastly influential works in mathematics, astronomy and geography. In his popular treatise **Al-Jabr** (book on algebra); he presented the first systematic solution of linear and quadratic equations. He extensively wrote about the mathematical discipline of **algorithm** in his book 'Al-Jabr' which later became popular in European countries.

In 9th century AD, **Al-Kindi** was an Arab philosopher, polymath, mathematician, physician and musician and is hailed as the '**Father of Arab Philosophy**'. For his contribution to mathematics, Al-Kindi played an important role in **introducing Indian numerals** to the Islamic world, and subsequently, relabelled as Arabic numerals, to the Christian world, along with Al-Khwarizmi.

In the 9th century AD, **Mahaviracharya** wrote **Ganit Sara Sangraha**. It is the earliest Indian text **entirely dedicated to Mathematics**. In his book, he described in detail about algebra, concepts such as equilateral and isosceles triangle, rhombus, circle, etc. He was patronised by Rashtrakarta King Amoghavarsha.

Bhaskara-I

*Bhaskara-I was a 7th century mathematician who wrote **Aryabhatiya-bhasya** related to Mathematics and astronomy. The Hindu Decimal System with a circle for zero was first mentioned by Bhaskara-I. He also provided a unique and remarkable rational approximation of the sine function in his commentary over Aryabhata's work. ISRO launched Bhaskara-I satellite in 1979, honouring the mathematician.*

Bhaskaracharya (Bhaskara-II) (1114–1185 AD)

He was one of the leading mathematicians in 12th century AD. His book *Siddhanta Shiromani* is divided into **four sections**:

- *Lilavati* (dealing with Arithmetic)
- *Bijganita* (dealing with Algebra)
- *Goladhyaya* (about Spheres)
- *Grahanita* (mathematics of Planets.)

A **chakrawat** method or the **cyclic method** to solve algebraic equations was introduced by him in his book *Lilavati*. In the 19th century, James Taylor translated *Lilavati* and made it known to the people across the globe.

Extract from *Lilavati*

Whilst making love a necklace broke.
A row of pearls mislaid
One sixth fell to the floor.
One fifth upon the bed.

The young woman saved one third of them.
One tenth were caught by her lover.
If six pearls remained upon the string.
How many pearls were there altogether?

In the **Medieval period**, **Narayan Pandit** produced works of mathematics which include *Ganitakaumudi* and *Bijaganitavatamsa*. **Nilakantha Somayaji** wrote *Tantrasamgraha*, an astronomical treatise which also contains the rules of **Trigonometric Functions**.

Lilavati was translated into Persian by **Faizi** in the court of Akbar. Moreover, **Akbar** ordered to make mathematics a subject of study in the education system during those times.

In the field of astronomy, **Feroz Shah Tughlaq** established an **observatory in Delhi** and **Feroz Shah Bahamani** at *Daulatabad*. The court astronomer of Feroz Shah Bahamani, Mahendra Suri, invented an astronomical instrument known as **Yantaraja**.

Sawai Jai Singh set up 5 astronomical observatories at Delhi, Jaipur, Varanasi, Ujjain and Mathura.



Medicine

During the Vedic times, **Ashwini Kumars** were the practitioners of medicine and were given the divine status. **Dhanvantari** was the God of Ayurveda medicine.

Atharva Veda was the first book where a mention about the diseases, its cure and medicines can be found. According to it, the diseases were caused by the demons and spirits entering into the human body and can be cured by magical charms and spells. Atharva Veda mentioned cure for many of the diseases which include *diarrhoea, sores, cough, leprosy, fever and seizure*.

However, the era of practical and more rational cure to diseases emerged around 600 BC. **Takshila** and **Varanasi** emerged as the centres for medicinal learning.



Ayurveda

The origin of Ayurveda dates back to Vedic era. Most material relating to the health and diseases are available in Atharva Veda. Historians claim that Ayurveda is a part of Atharva Veda. The earliest codified document on Ayurveda is *Charaka Samhita*. Another codified document is *Susruta Samhita*. Before them, **Atreya** and his pupil **Agnivesa** had already dealt with principles of Ayurveda way back in 6th century BC.

From around 500 BC to 500 AD there was a compilation of the different parts of Ayurveda. The **eight parts of Ayurveda include** – *Kayachikitsa* (therapeutics), *Salya-tantra* (major surgery), *Salakya-tantra* (minor surgery), *Bhutavidya* (demonology), *Kaumarabhrtya-tantra* (paediatrics), *Agada-tantra* (toxicology), *Rasayana-tantra* (geriatrics) and *Vajikarana-tatra* (vitilification).

The theories of Ayurveda were also applied to the plant and animal life. There are medical treatises on: Plant life (**Vriksayurveda**), Horses (**Avayurveda**), Elephants (**Hastyayurveda**), Bovine species (**Gavayurveda**).

The spread of Ayurveda in Arab countries as well as in other parts of the world is evident from different Ayurvedic texts or their translation found there. The *Susruta Samhita* was translated

under the title of **Kitab-Samural-hind-i**. Ali-ibn Zain translated the Charaka Samhita under the name **Sarag**.

Let us discuss in detail the two important treaties:

- ✿ **Charak Samhita** (deals with Ayurveda) by Charak, Father of Ayurveda.
- ✿ **Sushruta Samhita** (deals with Surgery) by Sushruta, Father of Surgery.

Charak Samhita

Charak Samhita mainly deals with use of **plants and herbs** for medicinal purposes. In a way, it mainly deals with **Ayurveda** as a science whose description is divided into eight books.

In Charak Samhita, extensive note on **digestion, metabolism** and **immune system** is written. Charak emphasises that the functioning of a human body depends on three *Doshas*: **(1) Bile, (2) Phlegm and (3) Wind**. These *doshas* are produced with the help of blood, flesh and marrow and an imbalance between these three *doshas* makes the body sick. Drugs can be used to restore this balance. Charaka in his book has put more emphasis on *prevention rather than cure*. Genetics also finds a mention in Charak Samhita.

Sushruta Samhita

Sushruta Samhita deals with practical problems of **surgery** and **obstetrics**. Sushruta studied anatomy in great detail with the aid of a human dead body. His forte was mainly:

- Rhinoplasty** (Plastic Surgery)
- Ophthalmology** (Ejection of Cataract)

Surgery was termed as *Sastrakarma* during those times. The book *Sushruta Samhita* records in detail the steps to be taken for the performance of a surgery. In this field, one of the greatest contributions of Sushruta was Rhinoplasty which means restoration of a mutilated **nose** through plastic surgery. The **ejection of cataracts** from eye was even done by Sushruta with ease and using simple surgical tools. Hence, it can be inferred that India also saw best of the developments in medicine when compared to the world.

The Buddhist monks from India took the **Ayurveda System to Tibet and China**. The translation of the two books also took place in Arabic language. Even the Greeks were influenced by the Indian medicines during the Indo-Greek rule in India in 180 BC-10 AD.

In the medieval period, **Sarangdhara Samhita** written in 13th century emphasised on the use of **opium** in medicines and for **urine examination** in laboratories.

The **Rasachikitsa system** dealt with treatment of diseases using **mineral medicines**.

The **Unani System** of medicine came to India with the book *Firdous-al-Hikmah* written by Ali-ibn-Rabbah.



Sushruta

Alternative Systems of Medicine

System	Details
Ayurveda	Discussed above
Yoga	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yoga originated in India and was propounded by sage Patanjali around 150 BC. It works on the level of one's body, mind, emotion and energy. Yoga generally has four broad classifications – Karma Yoga (utilise the body), Jnana Yoga (utilise the mind), Bhakti Yoga (utilise the emotion), Kriya Yoga (utilise the energy). UNESCO inscribed Yoga in the representative list of Intangible Cultural Heritage in 2016.
Unani	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This medical tradition of medieval Islam was introduced during 13th century AD with the establishment of the Delhi Sultanate. It was further developed during the Mughal Empire The system has Greek (Hellenistic) origin. Alauddin Khilji gave royal patronage to Unani system. Many Hakims were there in his court. In Unani, there are various means of treating patients like diet, pharmacotherapy, exercise, massage and surgery. One of the most popular methods of treatment practised by Unani Physicians is Regimental Therapy (Ila-Jil-Bil-Tadbeer).
Siddha	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This system originated in South India. 'Siddha' term is derived from the word 'Siddhi', which means 'perfection' or 'an object to be attained'. As per Siddha system, the human body is composed of 96 tattvas or basic principles. Siddha system uses various herbal, animal or inorganic chemical compounds, such as sulphur and mercury, for treating diseases. Practitioners are called siddhars. Nandhisar is considered the first siddha and the guru of all siddhars. Presently, it is largely practised in Southern Indian States (mainly Tamil Nadu). 'Neikkuri' or 'Oil Drop test of Urine' is a unique method in Siddha system of medicine for urine examination.
Homoeopathy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The term 'Homoeopathy' is derived from the Greek words 'Homois' and 'Pathos' (means 'similar' and 'suffering' respectively). After originating in Germany, it was introduced in India around 1810–1839. Homoeopathy is based on the Law of Healing – '<i>Similia Similibus Curantur</i>' means 'Likes are cured by Likes'. Homeopathic treatment is popular for diseases of chronic or prolonged nature.
Sowa-Rigpa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is one of the oldest, living and well-documented medical tradition of the world. Yuthog Yonten Gonpo from Tibet is believed to be the Father of Sowa-Rigpa. The term means 'Science of Healing'. It is commonly known as Amchi system of medicine. Gyud-Zi (four tantra) is the fundamental text related to Sowa-Rigpa. The majority of theory and practice of Sowa-Rigpa is similar to Ayurveda. It is widely practiced in Tibet, parts of China, Himalayan regions of India, Nepal, Bhutan, Russia and Mongolia. Dharamshala in Himachal Pradesh and Ladakh region are the main centres for Sowa-Rigpa Institutions in India.



Physics and Chemistry

From the Vedic times, the materials on Earth have been classified into *panchbhootas*. These *panchbhootas* were identified with human senses of perception.

- **Earth (prithvi) with smell**

- Fire (*agni*) with **vision**
- Air (*maya*) with **feeling**
- Water (*apa*) with **taste**
- Ether (*akash*) with **sound**

It has been perceived that the material world comprises of these five elements. The **Buddhist philosophers** who came later **rejected ether** as one of the elements and replaced it with *life*, *joy* and *sorrow*. Philosophers were of the view that except ether, all other four were physically palpable and therefore comprised minuscule particles of matter. The last minuscule matter which could not be further subdivided was called **Parmanu**. There are five different types of *parmanu* for five different elements. Hence, it can be inferred that Indian philosophers conceived the idea of splitting an **atom**. Indian philosophers Kanada and Pakudha Katyayana in 6th century BC first coined the idea of atoms and the material world being constituted of atoms. **Kanada** explained that material world is made up of *kana* which cannot be seen through human organ. They cannot be further subdivided and are **indestructible** as even said by the modern atomic theory.

Chemistry

The development of **Chemistry** in India was in phases through experimentation. The **areas of application** of chemistry were:

- Metallurgy (smelting of metals)
- Distillation of perfumes
- Making of dyes and pigments
- Extraction of sugar
- Production of paper
- Production of gunpowder
- Casting of canons, etc.

In India, Chemistry was called *Rasayan Shastra*, *Rasatantra*, *Rasa Vidya* and *Rasakriya*, all of which means **science of liquids**. Chemical laboratories were called *Rasakriya Shala* and a chemist was referred to as *rasadanya*.

The development of **metallurgy** started in India from the Bronze Age. In fact, the progress from Bronze Age to Iron Age to the present owes a great contribution to developments in metallurgy. In the area of smelting of metals, Indians had an expertise in extraction of metals from ore and its casting. It is possible that India had borrowed this idea from **Mesopotamia**. The best evidences of Indian metallurgy are **Iron Pillar of Mehrauli** in Delhi and an **idol of Gautama Buddha** in Sultanganj, Bihar. They have **not caught rust** even after thousands of years later after its manufacture.

One of the famous **Metallurgist and Alchemist** of ancient times was **Nagarjuna**. He was an expert in transforming the base metals into gold. Born in Gujarat in **931 AD**, Nagarjuna was blessed with this power of **changing base metals into gold** and extraction of '**Elixir of life**' as per the beliefs of the people.

Another treatise **Rasaratnakara** (a book on chemistry) mainly deals with preparation of liquids (**mainly mercury**). The book also emphasised on the survey of metallurgy and alchemy.

To prepare the **elixir of life from mercury**, Nagarjuna used animal and vegetable products apart from minerals and alkalis. He also discussed the **transmutation of base metals into gold**. Although gold could not be produced but the method has been useful in producing metals with gold like yellowish brilliance which even helps in manufacturing imitation jewellery.

The contribution of Nagarjuna in the field of chemistry had been immense as the idea of transformation of metals seems to be taken by Arabs from the Indian books.

Another treatise **Rasarnava** is a Sanskrit text written in medieval period (12th century) and deals with **Tantrism**. Its work on tantra deals with **metallic preparations** and **alchemy** under chemistry.

The preservation of ancient literature was generally done on **palm leaves**. However, the use of **paper begun in the medieval period**. Kashmir, Patna, Murshidabad, Ahmedabad, Aurangabad, Mysore, etc. were well-known centres of paper production. The process of paper making was almost the same throughout the nation.

After the advent of Mughals, the manufacture of **gunpowder** and its use in guns also started in India. Saltpetre, sulphur and charcoal were used in different ratios to produce different varieties of gunpowder. The casting of cannons is explicitly mentioned in **Tujuk-i-Baburi**.

Tufangchis: In the medieval period, the matchlock men were called the Tufangchis. They were held in high esteem during the Mughal rule. For reference, matchlock men is a historical type of firearm wherein the gunpowder is ignited by a burning piece of flammable cord or twine that is touched to the gunpowder by a mechanism that the musketeer activates by pulling a lever or trigger with his finger.

Munjaniq: A catapult or ballistic device used in the medieval period to throw projectiles.

Ain-i-Akbari discusses the '**regulation of perfume office**' of Akbar. **Asmat Begum**, mother of Noorjahan, is credited with the discovery of **attar** of roses.

In the field of **geology, hydrology and ecology**, the contribution of **Varahamihira** cannot be forgotten. He lived in the Gupta period and was probably among the nine gems in the court of Vikramaditya. His predictions were so accurate that king **Vikramaditya awarded him with the title of 'Varaha'**. He claimed that **presence of termites (Deemak)** and **plants** could indicate the **presence of water** in that particular area. A list comprising of six animals and 36 plants was given by him who could indicate the presence of water.

The **Earth Cloud Theory** was also propounded by him in his book *Brihat Samhita*. He related earthquake to the influence of plants, behaviour of animals, underground water, undersea



Nagarjuna (Chemist)

activities and the unusual cloud formation. He also made contributions in Astrology or *Jyotish Shastra*.

Rasesvara

A Shaiva philosophical tradition which advocated the use of mercury to make the body immortal.



Ship Building and Navigation

There have been many references of maritime activities by Indians during ancient times. Sanskrit and Pali literature had a mention of ship building and navigation activities.

Yukti Kalpa Taru is a treatise in **Sanskrit** by Bhoja Parmar, and deals with the various **techniques used in ship building** during ancient times. The book contains minute details about the types of ships, their sizes and the types of material used to build those ships. Indian builders possessed good knowledge about the materials used for ship building during ancient times. The ships were primarily classified into **two** classes:

- **Samanya** (Ordinary Class)
- **Vishesha** (Special Class)

The ordinary class is for a sea voyage and had two types of ships:

- **Dirgha** type of ship – long and narrow hull
- **Unnata** type of ship – higher hull

According to **length and the position of cabins**, the ships were classified into:

- **Sarvamandira** – cabins extending from one end of the deck to another, used for transportation of **royal treasure and horses**.
- **Madhyamarnandira** – cabins in the middle part of the deck, for **pleasure trips**.
- **Agramandira** – vessels used for **warfare**.

Some of the Sanskrit terminologies used during ancient times for various parts of the ship are:

- Anchor of the ship – *Navā Bandhan Kilaha*
- Sail – *Vata Vastra*
- Rudder of the ship – *Jeni Pata* or *Karna*
- Keel of the ship – *Navā Tala*
- Compass of the ship – *Machayantra* or *Fish Machine* (in the shape of a fish)



Other Important Contributors of Ancient and Medieval India



Vararuci

Vararuci appears as a distinguished character in **Kathasaritsagara** by Somadeva Bhatta (11th century AD). **Parayi Petta Panthirukulam** is a popular folktale of Kerala. It states that Vararuci was one of the nine gems of the court of Vikramaditya (57 BC–78 AD).



Acharya Pingala (3rd–2nd century BC)

He was an ancient Indian mathematician and poet. He wrote the **Chandahśāstra** (also known as the Pingala-sutras). It is the earliest known treatise on Sanskrit prosody. Pingala was the first to use the concept of the binary numbers. He also worked on Fibonacci numbers. Initially, it was called Matrameru.



Lagadha

Lagadha Muni was an ancient Indian mathematician and astronomer. He is believed to have lived during 1200 BC. He wrote **Vedanga Jyotiṣha** that described the winter solstice for the period around 1400 BC.



Jīvaka

Jīvaka was a legendary physician of ancient India. He was described as the 'Medicine King' and was the personal physician of King Bimbisāra and Lord Buddha. Jīvaka lived in the 5th century BC in Rajgriha or Rajgir under the Magadha empire.



Chaturveda Prithudaka Swami (830–890)

He was an ancient Indian mathematician. He is known for his work on solving equations. He wrote commentary on Brahmagupta's work.



Āryabhaṭa II (920–1000)

He was an Indian astronomer and mathematician. He was the author of the **Maha-siddhanta**.



Narayan Pandit (1340–1400)

Narayan Pandit was a medieval Indian mathematician and the author of the **Ganita Kaumudi** (*moonlight of mathematics*) in 1356. It discusses mathematical operations.

Mahendra Sūri (1340–1400)

He was a Jain astronomer of the 14th century and was patronised by Firuz Shah Tughluq. He wrote the ***Yantraraja*** (*an astrolabe user's manual*).

Mādhava of Sangamagrāma (1340–1425)

He was the founder of the Kerala school of astronomy and mathematics. Mādhava made significant contributions to the study of infinite series, trigonometry, algebra and geometry.

Vatasserī Parameshvara Nambudiri (1380–1460)

He was an ancient Indian mathematician and astronomer associated with the Kerala school of astronomy and mathematics. Based on several observations, Parameshvara revised astronomical computational parameters, which came to be known as the **Drgganita**.

Kejallur Nilakantha Somayaji (1444–1545)

He was a mathematician and astronomer associated with the Kerala school of astronomy and mathematics. One of his noted works was the astronomical treatise ***Tantrasamgraha***. He also composed commentary on Aryabhatiya, called the ***Aryabhatiya Bhāṣya***.

Chitrabhanu

He was a mathematician in the 16th century of the Kerala school, noted for a concise astronomical manual, ***Karana***. He was a student of Nilakantha Somayaji.

Melpathur Narayana Bhattathiri (1560–1646/1666)

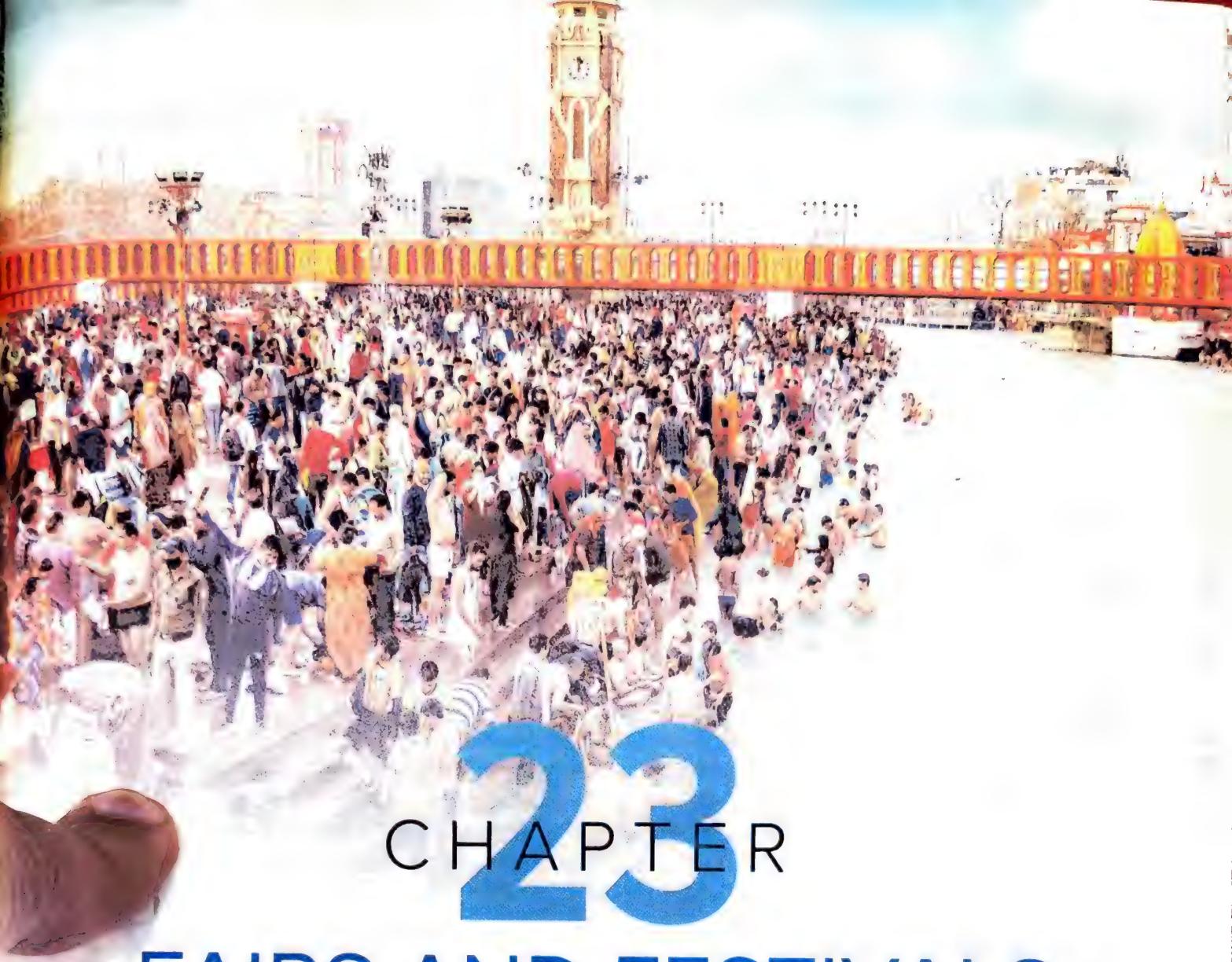
He was associated with the Kerala school of astronomy and mathematics. His notable works included ***Prakriya-sarvasvam*** (*an axiomatic system elaborating on the classical system of Panini's grammar*) and ***Narayaneeyam*** (*a devotional composition in praise of Guruvayurappan or Lord Krishna that is still sung at Guruvayur Temple*).

Two famous **Sports of India** during ancient times were:

- **Kalaripayattu:** It was a martial art from **Kerala** which was transmitted to China in 5th or 6th century AD by a sage called Bodhidharma. The present form of **Judo** and **Karate** did originate from Kalaripayattu.
- **Chausar/Pachisi:** The game was known as '**Chaturanga**' meaning four bodies. It was played with counters and Aksha (dice). It was played on a board called **ashtapada**. Chaturanga finds its mention in the famous epic **Mahabharata** where this game was played between Kauravas and the Pandavas. Pachisi was later modified to use a cubic die with dice cup which is patented as **Ludo** in 1896 in England.

CHAPTER SUMMARY

- India carries a rich legacy of scientific ideas – indicated since the Harappan age – knowledge of measurement and geometry – use of geometric patterns found in temples.
- Shulbasutra** – the earliest book on mathematics written by Baudhayana.
- Aryabhatiya** – written by Aryabhata around 499 AD – contains four sections – Gitikapada, Ganitapada, Kalakriyapada and Golapada.
- Brahmasputa Siddhanta** – written by Brahmagupta around 7th century AD – clear description of quadratic formula.
- During Vedic times, Ashwini Kumars were the practitioners of medicine – Dhanvantari was the God of Ayurveda medicine – in later periods, Takshila and Varanasi became the centres of medicinal learning.
- Charak Samhita** – deals with Ayurveda – written by Charak – Father of Ayurveda – use of plants and herbs – three doshas, namely, bile, phlegm and wind.
- Sushruta Samhita** – deals with surgery – written by Sushruta – Father of Surgery – Rhinoplasty – Ophthalmology.
- Development of metallurgy started in India from the Bronze Age – possibly borrowed from Mesopotamia – Iron Pillar of Mehrauli is possibly the best evidence of Indian metallurgy.
- Nagarjuna** – famous metallurgist and alchemist of ancient times – discussed the transmutation of base metals into gold.
- Varahamihira** – contributed in the fields of geology, hydrology and ecology – wrote Brihat Samhita – also made contributions in Astrology.
- Yukti Kalpa Taru** – treatise in Sanskrit by Bhoja Parmar – deals with techniques used in ship building.



23 CHAPTER

FAIRS AND FESTIVALS OF INDIA



Introduction

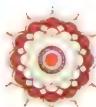
Festivals and fairs form an intrinsic part of Indian culture, being an outpouring medium of our beliefs and emotions. Each community has its own festivals and holy days, but that does not stop other religious groups from enjoying these festive days. India is a secular country and holidays are declared for a number of festivals belonging to different faiths and communities.

Some festivals come under the '**restricted list**', which implies that the employer can choose to make it a holiday or not. Festivals are integral to understand the culture of India, and even people from abroad make it a part of their travel experience when they come to India.

National Festivals

National festivals are celebrated to commemorate great historical events of national importance. A strong feeling of patriotism in the minds of Indians is inculcated through these festivals. India celebrates **three national festivals**, namely:

S. No.	Date	Day
1	26th January	Republic Day
2	15th August	Independence Day
3	2nd October	Gandhi Jayanti



Religious Festivals

These are the festivals that are usually celebrated by **specific communities** that believe in a particular belief system or religion. However, there are no restrictions for people from other religions to enjoy these festivals. For example, *Holi* is primarily a religious festival celebrated by Hindus, but in a secular country like India, even non-Hindus enjoy it. Some of the major religious festivals celebrated in India are discussed below:



Hindu Festivals

Prominent Hindu festivals are listed below:

Name	Details
Diwali or Deepawali	It is the festival of lights celebrated on the new moon (Amavasya) day in the month of Kartik which generally falls in October and November. The day before the festival is called Naraka Chaturdashi .
Dev Deepawali	It is celebrated in Varanasi (Uttar Pradesh) and falls on the full moon of the Hindu month of Kartik (November–December) and takes place 15 days after Diwali . People have a tradition of lighting lamps on the ghats of River Ganga there. It is also observed as Tripura Purnima Snan .
Holi	It is the ' Festival of Colours ' and is celebrated by people across religions. It falls in the month of Phalguna (February–March). It signifies the triumph of good over evil, i.e., burning of Holika and saving of Bhakt Prahlada . In West Bengal and parts of Assam, it is known as Dol Jatra .
Bhai Dooj	It is a famous festival celebrated by Hindus on the second lunar day of Shukla Paksha of Kartika month. Southern part of India celebrates the same day as Yama Dwitiya . Sisters perform <i>aarti</i> for their brothers, apply a <i>teeka</i> on their forehead and pray for their long and happy life.
Akshaya Tritiya	It is an important Hindu festival that is celebrated on Tritiya Tithi (third day) of Shukla Paksha of Vaishakh month. It is also known as Akha Teej . It is believed that Lord Parashuram, Lord Vishnu's sixth incarnation, was born on Akshaya Tritiya.

Name	Details
Makara Sankranti	This festival is dedicated to the Sun God, Surya . It celebrates the transition of the Sun in the Northern Hemisphere. The festival is celebrated in the month of January . Lakhs of people undergo a pilgrimage to Gangasagar (in West Bengal) and to Prayagraj to take a holy dip. At some places in India, it is also celebrated as a kite flying festival .
Rama Navami	It is the celebration of the birth of Lord Shri Rama. It is believed that on this day, Lord Rama, the seventh incarnation of Lord Vishnu, incarnated as a human being in Ayodhya. In Ayodhya, a huge fair is organised with thousands of devotees to celebrate this festival.
Raksha Bandhan	Raksha Bandhan is a festival which is widely celebrated in India. It is popularly known as Rakhi. This festival signifies brotherhood and love among Indians. In this festival, sisters tie a band, called rakhi, around the wrists of their brothers. Raksha Bandhan is defined as the safety bond of purity and bonding between siblings and cousins. It occurs on the full moon day at the end of the month of Shravan.
Janamasthami	It is to celebrate the birth anniversary of Lord Krishna and generally falls in the month of August.
Dussehra	Also known as Bijaya Dashmi, it is celebrated across India to honour the victory of Lord Rama over Ravana. Ravana-Dahan is a common feature observed during this day especially in North India.
Durga Puja	It is majorly celebrated in the eastern part of India (especially West Bengal). It is to celebrate Goddess Durga's triumph over demon Mahishasura.
Ganesh Chaturthi	To commemorate the birth anniversary of Lord Ganesha , this festival is celebrated across India but with a great pomp and show in Maharashtra as it is the main festival there.
Ratha Yatra (Chariot Festival)	It is the biggest festival of Odisha and is dedicated to three deities – Lord Jagannath, Lord Balabhadra (his brother) and Subhadra (his sister). The Chariot Festival or Ratha Yatra of Goddess Puri is the largest and very famous in this regard.
Chhath Puja	It is the main festival of Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Jharkhand and is celebrated to honour the Sun God and his sister Chhathi Maiya . It is observed after days of rigorous fasting followed by a holy bath and offerings to the Sun God and Chhathi Maiya. Thekua (a sweet dish) is a special attraction among the offerings to the god.

Nabakalebara Festival

- **Nabakalebara festival is observed at Shri Jagannath Temple, Puri (Odisha) at a pre-defined time (after every 8 to 19 years) according to the Hindu calendar.** **Nabakalebara** means new body, i.e., the idols of Lord Jagannath, Balabhadra, Subhadra and Sudarshan are **replaced with new idols**. The new idols are made from the **log (daru)** of four separate **neem trees** which are selected as per set criteria and after a rigorous search.
- **From the daru or log of the selected neem trees, the idols are carved and are replaced during Adhik Maas (intercalary month).** Lakhs of pilgrims attend to worship the selected neem tree and the ceremony of replacement of idols.
- **In March 2018, the President of India released Rs 1000 and Rs 10 commemorative coins on the occasion of the Nabakalebara festival.**

Makaravilakku Festival

- It is an annual festival held **on Makar Sankranti** at the shrine of **Sabarimala** in Kerala.
- Sabarimala Temple is located inside the **Periyar Tiger Reserve**.

- The temple is dedicated to the Hindu celibate deity **Ayyappan** also known as **Dharma Shastha**, who according to belief is the son of Shiva and Mohini, the feminine incarnation of Vishnu.
- During this festival, devotees gather at Sabarimala sannidhanam to get a glimpse of divya **Makara Jyothi**.
- The traditions of Sabarimala depict the confluence of **Shaivism, Shaktism, Vaishnavism** and other **Sramana traditions**.
- Recently, the Supreme Court ordered Sabarimala Temple administration to allow entry to **women of all ages** declaring restrictions unconstitutional.

Attukal Pongala

- The annual 10-day Attukal Pongala festival is held at **Attukal Bhagavathy Temple** in **Thiruvananthapuram (Kerala)**.
- It is popularly known as **women's Sabarimala** – where only women are allowed to take part in the rituals.
- It is one of the largest congregations of women for a festival in the world.
- Pongala, which means 'to boil over', is the ritual in which women prepare sweet payasam and offer it to Goddess 'Bhagavathy'.



Attukal Pongala

Bathukamma Festival

- Bathukamma which means 'Mother Goddess come Alive' is a **colourful floral festival** of **Telangana and some parts of Andhra Pradesh**.
- It is a nine-day festival celebrated generally in September–October.
- **Bathukamma** is a beautiful flower stack of different unique seasonal flowers (most of them with medicinal value) arranged in seven concentric layers in the shape of a temple **gopuram**.



Bathukamma Festival

New Year

According to local traditions, **Lord Brahma** began the creation of the world on this day, and hence it is used to mark the beginning of a new Hindu calendar. In different parts of the country it is celebrated under different names and in different dates (mostly in Chaitra and Baisakha) as follows:

New Year Festivals	State/UT
Ugadi or Chaitra Shudhda Paadyami	Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka
Gudi Padwa or Gudi Padvo	Maharashtra
Samvatsar Padvo	Goa
Naba Barsha (Poila Boisakh)	West Bengal
Puthandu	Tamil Nadu
Vishu	Kerala
Navreh	Kashmir
Pana Sankranti	Odisha

Sair-e-Gul Faroshan

The festival is also known as '*Phool Walon Ki Sair*' and is the **annual three-day festival of flowers** conducted in **Delhi**. It is a symbol of **communal harmony** in which procession of pankhas or palm leaf fans which are heavily decorated with flowers are taken from the tomb of Khwaja Bakhtiyar Kaki in Mehrauli to the Yogmaya Temple.

- The festival was initially patronised by Mughal Emperor Akbar II (19th century). It was **banned by the British** but reinstated in 1962 by J. L. Nehru.

Tyagaraja Aradhana

- It is held annually to commemorate the day when the famous Telugu saint and composer Tyagaraja attained '**samadhi**'. It is held in Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu, primarily at **Thiruvaiyaru** (where he attained samadhi). The festival is attended by leading exponents of Carnatic music who come to pay their tribute to the saint.
- Saint Tyagaraja along with Muthuswami Dikshitar and Syama Sastri, comprise the **Trinity of Carnatic music**.

Raja Parba

- It is a 3-day long festival of Odisha, to celebrate and honour womanhood, during the month of Asadha. It is believed that during this period Mother Earth menstruates and prepares herself for future agricultural activities with the arrival of monsoon. It ends with a traditional bathing ceremony.

MAP: NEW YEAR FESTIVALS OF INDIA

Onam

- Onam, the state festival of **Kerala**, falls in the beginning of the month of Chingam, the first month of the Malayalam calendar.

- It is mainly a **harvest festival**, but it also celebrates the homecoming of mighty asura King **Mahabali** from Patala (the underground). Elaborate feasts, dances, flowers, boats and elephants are part of the colourful and vibrant festival of Onam.
- A prominent feature of Onam is the **Vallam Kali (the snake boat race)**. The most popular Vallam Kali is held in the **Punnamada Lake**, and the winners are awarded the Nehru Boat Race Trophy. Traditional games, known as **Onakalikal**, also form a part of the Onam celebrations.

Pongal

- Pongal is a four-day **harvest festival** celebrated by **Tamilians** around the world. It is celebrated in January and marks the beginning of Uttarayan, that is six-month northward journey of the Sun.
- The word 'Pongal' means 'to boil' in Tamil, and the boiling of the first rice is an important ritual performed during the festival. It is held in the month of 'Thai', a time when various crops such as rice, sugarcane and turmeric are harvested. It is an occasion for giving thanks to the **Sun God** and celebrating the life cycles that give us grain.

Nua Khai Festival

It is an agricultural festival celebrated mainly in Odisha. It is observed on Panchami Tithi in the lunar fortnight of Bhaadra month (August–September). This day is followed by Ganesh Chaturthi. 'Nua' means new and 'khai' means food. It is the festival of newly harvested rice. Arisa Pitha (sweet pancake) is prepared in this festival.

Sarhul

- Sarhul marks the beginning of the **New Year** for the **tribes of Jharkhand, Odisha and West Bengal**. It is mainly celebrated by the **Munda, Oraon and Ho tribes**.
- Sarhul literally means 'Worship of Sal'. It is celebrated in the spring season, that is in the month of Phalguni according to the Hindu calendar.
- The tribal people hold **nature** in great reverence, and Mother Earth is worshipped during the festival. Sarhul is celebrated for several days during which the main traditional Sarhul dance is performed. It is related to a religious practice called '**Sarnaism**'.

Vishwa Shanti Ahimsa Sammelan – held in 2018

- Vishwa Shanti Ahimsa Sammelan (VSAS)** took place in **Mangi-Tungi Hills** in Maharashtra. The hills have about 10 Jain cave temples.
- Mangi and Tungi** have special significance in Jainism because around 990 million Digambara Jains achieved salvation on these two hills. Therefore, the area is called '**Siddha Kshetra**'.
- The 108-ft tall statue of Jain **Tirthankara Rishabhdev** is located in **Mangi-Tungi**. This is the tallest monolithic Jain statue in the world.

Muslim Festivals

Eid-ul-Fitr

- This is one of the festivals celebrated by the Muslim community worldwide. The festival falls after the last day of the holy month of **Ramadan (Ramzan)**, which is the **ninth month** of the Islamic calendar. During the month of Ramadan, people fast for the entire day, beginning from sunrise to sunset.
- This process of fasting is ordained in the Muslim law or the Sharia. The date of the festival of Eid-ul-Fitr is calculated after a complicated process and is set to be on the **first day of the month of Shawwal** and after the appearance of the moon at the end of the month of Ramadan.

Eid-ul-Zuha or Eid-al-Adha

- This is also known as Bakr-Eid or the Id that involves the sacrifice of a goat or *Bakra*. This is celebrated on the 10th day of the Dhu-al-Hijjah (**12th month** of the Islamic calendar). It is celebrated in honour of **Prophet Ibrahim's** devotion to Allah, which was tested when God asked him to sacrifice his son. It is said that Ibrahim readily agreed to cut off his son's head but God was merciful and took the sacrifice of a goat's head.
- Hence, on the day of Eid-ul Azha, a goat's head is sacrificed and the meat is distributed as ritual offerings amongst the family members and neighbours. One-third of the sacrificial meat is also given to the poor. This Eid also marks the **beginning** of the sacred period when many people undertake the **pilgrimage to Mecca**, which is called **Hajj**.

Milad-un-Nabi

- This marks the **birth and death anniversary** of **Prophet Muhammad**. According to the texts, the Prophet was born in the month of **Rabial-Awwal**, which is the third month of the Islamic calendar. The day is called **Milad-un-Nabi** or **Mawlid-un-Nabi**. This day is also **supposed to be the day** when the Prophet **departed from Earth**.
- The day is part of the cache of national holidays. It is celebrated with deep reverence and solemnity. People gather at the mosques where the Holy Quran is read out. In some special gatherings, the religious scholars recite the **Qasidat al-Burda**, the very sacred poem by Arabic Sufi **Busiri** written in the 13th century. They also sing **Nats**, which are traditional poems written in honour of the Prophet and illustrating his good deeds.
- The festival is called **Barah Wafat** as it signifies the 12 days of sickness that led to Prophet Muhammad's death. It holds special significance in places like Kashmir, where the relics of the Prophet are displayed in the **Hazratbal Shrine**, which is situated in Srinagar. Thousands of devotees flock the area and take part in the procession.

Muharram

- The festival of Muharram is a sad one, as it is associated with the **death of Hussain, son of Ali**. The festival falls in the **first month** of the Islamic calendar which is Muharram.

Incidentally, the **Islamic New Year** falls on the first day of the first month of the Islamic calendar. The 10th day of the month of Muharram is known as the **Yaum-E-Ashura**, which is observed as the day of mourning by **Shia Muslims** all over the world.

- It is observed in memory of the martyrdom of **Hussain Bin Ali**, the grandson of the Prophet in the Battle of Karbala in **61 Hijri (680 AD)**. In India, people take out processions called **Tazia** and beat themselves with chains to replicate the pains taken by Hussain. In most parts of India, people wear black clothes and distribute **sherbet** or juice to everyone.

Shab-e-Barat

- It is also known as the '**Night of Emancipation**' and is observed on the night falling between the 14th and 15th day of the month of **Sha'ban**. According to Muslim tradition, the **destiny** of every person is determined on this night. Most Shia Muslims celebrate the 15th day of **Sha'ban** as the birth anniversary of **Imam Muhammad al-Mahdi** who was the 12th imam. He is credited with ridding the world from oppression and injustice.

Shab-e-Miraj

Shab-e-Miraj means the '**Night of Ascent**'. It was believed that the Holy Prophet continued his journey and reached the Almighty. It was on this journey that **five daily prayers were made obligatory** upon Muslims.

Christian Festivals

Christmas

- This day is celebrated all across the world as the **birth anniversary of Jesus Christ**. It falls on the 25th of December every year. The celebrations begin with the midnight mass that is held at all the churches on the night of 24th-25th December, which signifies the birth of Christ at midnight. People visit the church where several programmes are arranged for the devotees to remember the good work of Christ.
- People visit each other's houses and exchange gifts. The two rituals attached to the festival are of the **Christmas Tree**, which is set in everyone's house. It is decorated with lamps and lights. The other myth is of **Santa Claus** who is supposed to be a harbinger of gifts. People sing carols and distribute sweets and cakes on this day.

Easter and Good Friday

- This is the day celebrated for the **resurrection of Jesus Christ**. According to the Bible, three days after Jesus was crucified, he was resurrected and, hence, Easter is supposed to signify the **triumph of life over death**. There are some similarities in the Christian and Jewish traditions on the occasion of Easter.
- For example, during the early years of Christianity, the Jewish Christians celebrated Easter on the 14th day of the Jewish month of Nisan. But the non-Jewish Christians celebrated it

on the Sunday closest to the 14th day of Nisan. This confusion was solved after the historic Council of Nicaea held in 325 AD fixed the date of Easter as the **first Sunday** after the first full moon following the vernal Equinox, which roughly falls on 21st March.

- ✿ The festival of **Good Friday** is to commemorate the day of the **crucifixion of Jesus Christ**. It falls in the month of April each year.



Sikh Festivals

Gurpurab

- ✿ The Sikh community all over the world celebrates it. Although Gurpurabs are celebrated for the birth anniversaries of all the 10 Sikh gurus, the most important are the **Guru Nanak** and **Guru Gobind Singh**. Other important Gurpurabs are to commemorate the martyrdom of **Guru Arjan Dev** and **Guru Tegh Bahadur**, who lost their lives to the **Mughals**.
- ✿ The Sikh community celebrates Guru Nanak Jayanti on the occasion of Guru Nanak's birthday. All the Gurudwaras hold special services and langar is distributed to people on this day. All the Gurpurabs are cause for celebration and remembering the lord.
- ✿ Hence, **Akhand Path** is held, and people take out **Prabhat Pheris** or congregational singing of **shabads** or hymns that praise the lord. The festivities are concluded by carrying the Guru Granth Sahib in a procession on a decorated floral float that is led at the front by the five-armed guards carrying Sikh flags (**Nishan Sahibs**). These five men are representatives of the **Panj Pyare** or the 'five beloved men' to Guru Gobind Singh.

Parkash Utsav Dasveh Patshah

- ✿ This festival is celebrated on the **birthday** of the 10th Sikh guru, **Guru Gobind Singh**. It also means the birth celebration of the 10th Divine Light or Divine Knowledge. This occasion is widely celebrated by the Sikhs on **31 January** every year.

Maghi

- ✿ It is the seasonal gathering of Sikhs, and it is celebrated annually. It is celebrated at **Muktsar** in memory of 40 **Sikh martyrs (Chali Mukte)** who fought with the Mughals.
- ✿ The Sikhs take a procession to the site of this Sikh–Muslim War and take a bath in the sacred waters of Muktsar. It is celebrated on **14 January** every year.

Hola Mohalla

- ✿ It is a big festive event for the Sikhs. It often takes place in the month of March on the second day of the lunar month Chett and is held in **Anandpur Sahib**.
- ✿ It was started by Guru Gobind Singh for mock battles and military exercises followed by kirtan and other poetry competitions.
- ✿ It is also known as the '**Sikh Olympics**' for events and competitions such as horse riding and swordsmanship.

Vaisakhi/Baisakhi

- It is a religious festival celebrated on the **13th or 14th of April** every year. This festival is the celebration of the Sikh New Year and marks the birth of the **Khalsa Panth**.
- This is the spring harvest festival for the Sikhs.

Lohri

- This occasion is celebrated on **13 January** in the month of Paush, a day before Makar Sankranti. Lohri celebrates fertility and the spark of life. People gather around bonfires, throw sweets, puffed rice and popcorn into the flames, sing popular songs and exchange greetings.
- It also signifies the **victory of light over darkness**.

Sodal Mela

- It is one of the main fairs of **Punjab**, and it is organised **to pay homage to Baba Sodal**, a great soul. Each year, the Mela is organised in the month of Bhadon (September) in **Jalandhar**.
- The followers of Sikhism consider this day a very auspicious one. The fair takes place on the Samadhi of the Baba, where his painted portrait is placed decorated with rosaries and flowers. People take a dip in the holy waters of the Sarovar (a holy tank called Sodal ka Sarovar) and present offerings to the Samadhi.

Jain Festivals

Mahavir Jayanti

- The **Jain community** celebrates the festival. It is held to celebrate the birth anniversary of Lord Mahavira who was the **24th Tirthankara** and one of the founders of Jainism. It falls on the 13th day of the month of rising moon called Chaitra.
- The festival is celebrated with great pomp, and all the Jain temples are decorated with **saffron flags**.
- The idol of Mahavira is washed with milk and given a ceremonial bath (*abhishek*). It is then carried in a procession.

Paryushana

- The annual festival of Jains is called Paryushana. It is celebrated for **eight days** in the month of **Bhadrapada** (August/September) by the **Svetambara sect**.
- The **Digambara sect** celebrates the festival for **10 days**. The festival marks the movement of the nomadic Jain monks to their retreats because of the torrential rain and monsoon showers that make their residence in forests and caves impossible.
- The festivities include the ritual visit to the temples or the **Upashravas** and listening to the discourses on the *Kalpa Sutra*. Most devotees are asked to perform **Pratikramana** or the meditation kriya. The festival ends with the celebration of **Kshamavani (forgiveness day)**.

Forgiveness is asked by saying '**Micchami Dukkadam**' to others. It means for oneself to seek forgiveness, if someone's been hurt knowingly or unknowingly by them.

Mahamastakabhisheka

- It is held once in 12 years in the town of **Shravanabelagola** in Karnataka. This festival is the holy bathing ceremony of the 57 ft high statue of **Siddha Bahubali, son of Rishabhdev**.
- The concentrated water is sprinkled by the devotees carrying specially prepared vessels. The statue is bathed in milk, sugarcane juice and saffron paste, and sprinkled with powders of sandalwood, turmeric and vermillion.

Gyana Panchami

- The fifth day of Kartik is known as '**Gyana Panchami**'. It is considered knowledge day. On this day Holy Scriptures are displayed and worshipped under Jainism.

Varshi Tapa or Akshay Tritiya Tapa

- This festival is related with first Jain Tirthankara **Rishabhdev** who undertook a fasting of 13 months and 13 days continuously. His fasting came to an end on the third day of the bright fortnight of Vaisakha month of the Jain calendar. People who perform this fasting are known as **Varshi Tapa**.

Maun Agiyaras

- This occasion is celebrated on the 11th day of Magshar month of the Jain calendar (November/December). On this day, **complete silence is observed** along with fasting. Meditation is also performed.

Navpad Oli

- The **nine-day Oli is a period of semi-fasting**. During this period, Jains take only one meal a day of very plain food. It comes **twice a year** during March/April and September/October.



Buddhist Festivals

Buddha Purnima

The Buddha Purnima or Buddha Jayanti is celebrated as the birth anniversary of Lord Buddha. It falls in the month of April/May and is celebrated widely in parts of North-East India. It is called **Saga Dawa** (Dasa) in Sikkim and **Visakha Puja** in the **Theravada** tradition. The main areas of celebration in Northern India are Sarnath in Uttar Pradesh and Bodh Gaya in Bihar.

The celebrations include ritualistic prayers and listening to sermons on the life of Gautama Buddha. The day also includes chanting of Buddhist scriptures, worshipping the image of Buddha and the Bodhi tree and meditation. Different sects follow different rules as follows:

- **Mahayana Buddhists** organise a large procession with musical instruments such as **gyalings**. They also read **Kangyur** text.
- **Theravada Buddhists** only concentrate on offering ceremonial prayers to the idols of Buddha.

Songkran

This Buddhist festival is observed like a **spring cleaning**. It is celebrated for several days during the middle of April. People **clean their houses**, wash clothes and enjoy sprinkling perfumed water on the monks.

Ploughing Festival

This festival is celebrated on **Buddha's first moment of enlightenment** when he was 7 years old and he **went with his father to watch ploughing**. This is celebrated in the month of May, where two white oxen pull a gold-painted plough, followed by four girls dressed in white who throw rice seeds from baskets.

Ulambana

- This occasion is celebrated from the 1st to the 15th day of the eighth lunar month. It is believed that the **gates of Hell are opened** on the first day, and the **ghosts may visit** the world for 15 days. Food offerings are made during this time to relieve the sufferings of these ghosts. On the 15th day (**Ulambana** or **Ancestor Day**), people visit the cemeteries to make offerings to the departed souls.

Hemis Gompa

- The festival is held at the Hemis Gompa Monastery in **Ladakh** to celebrate the **birth anniversary of Guru Rinpoche (Padmasambhava)**. In order to protect his people, the founder of Tibetan Buddhism, Guru Padmanasambhava fought the evil forces, and thus this festival celebrates the **victory of good over evil**.
- The main attraction of the festival is the **mask dance performed by the lamas**. Numerous musicians play the traditional music using four pairs of cymbals, large-pan drums, small trumpets and large size wind instruments.

Sindhi Festivals

Chaliho Sahib

- It is a **40-day fast** observed by the Sindhis in the months of July–August. They pray to **Lord Jhulelal** for 40 days, and after the fast is over they celebrate the occasion as **Thanksgiving Day**.
- Mirkshah Badshah, a Muslim invader of Sindh, troubled the people of Thatta and wanted them to convert to Islam. People prayed to Varun Devta or the God of Water by observing penance on the banks of the river for 40 days. On the 40th day, Varun Devta heard their prayers and promised to save them from the tyrant. The answer to their prayers was **Jhulelal**.

Cheti Chand

- This is the occasion of the **Sindhi New Year**, and it is celebrated all around the world. It is celebrated on the first day of Chaitra. Cheti Chand is celebrated in honour of the **birth of Jhulelal**, the patron saint of the Sindhis. It is celebrated with pomp and gaiety by the Sindhi community.

Parsi or Zoroastrian Festivals

Jamshedi Navroz

- The festival of Navroz is to celebrate the festival of New Year for the Parsi community. It falls on the **Roj Hormuzd** or the first day of the first month (**Farvardin**) of the **Shahenshahi** calendar. It is supposed to be the beginning of the Universal Dawn as this is the end of winter and the beginning of the New Year.

Traditionally Parsis pay respects to **Khorshed** and **Meher Yazad** who are the two divine beings that are the harbingers of the Sun. People visit each other and the **Fire Temple**. Other festivals of the Parsis are as follows:

Name of the Festival	Falls on the Day	Occasion	Rituals Observed
Zarthost no deeso	On the 11th day of the 10th month (<i>Khorshed roz, Dae mah</i>)	Death anniversary of Prophet Zoroaster	Parsis or Zoroastrians go to the Fire Temple and offer prayers and listen to the life and works of the Prophet.
Khordad Sal	On the sixth day of the Parsi month of <i>Farvardin</i> (August/September)	On the birth anniversary of Prophet	Parsis offer prayers and hold special grand feasts.
Pateti	On the last Gatha day on the Parsi Calendar	To offer repentance for the crimes committed during the year	Parsis offer prayers, give alms to the poor and make feasts at home.



Major Festivals of North-East India



Behdienkhlem Festival

- Behdienkhlem means driving away the plague disease.
- This festival is annually celebrated during monsoon season mainly in the **Jaintia Hills district** in **Meghalaya**.
- It is a ritualistic expression of the relentless struggle of mankind to overcome the destructive forces of nature, including diseases (plague).
- The main feature of the festival is the making of the rounded, polished **log** from the tall trunks of trees.
- Jaintia men carry 'Rongs' or chariots during the Behdienkhlem festival.



Behdienkhlem Festival

- As part of the celebration, a game similar to football called **Dad-Lawakor** is also held, with each team trying to score a goal with a **wooden ball**.

Saga Dawa (Triple Blessed Festival)

- It is mostly celebrated in the **Buddhist** communities living in the state of **Sikkim**.
- It is celebrated on the full moon day that falls in the middle of the Tibetan lunar month called the Saga Dawa. This day is considered to be a very auspicious day for the **Tibetan community**. This falls between May and June, and this **month is called Saga Dawa** or the 'Month of Merits'.
- The festival is celebrated to commemorate the birth, enlightenment and death (*parinirvana*) of Buddha. Most people make a pilgrimage to the monasteries and offer incense sticks, *Dhog* and water.
- People also circumambulate the Gompas of the monastery and chant mantras, recite the religious texts and turn the prayer wheels. All through the month of Saga Dawa, the community of Buddhists has to follow the **three teachings** of Buddhism: **generosity** (*dana*), **morality** (*sila*) and **meditation** or good feelings (*bhavana*).

Losoong Festival

- Losoong is the **Sikkimese New year**. It is celebrated all across Sikkim during the month of December every year. As mentioned earlier, the major occupation in the state of Sikkim is agriculture, and it is the celebration of the **harvest season** by the farmers and other occupational communities.
- Traditionally, it is considered to be the festival of the **Bhutia tribe** but nowadays even the **Lepchas** celebrate it with equal vigour and joy. The unique point of the festival is that people drink the **locally brewed wine**, called **Chhaang**, as part of the celebration. They also get together to perform traditional dances such as the Cham dance and the Black Hat dance at the monasteries. The spirit also reflects the warrior sentiments of the Sikkimese community through archery festivals and the like.

Bihu Festival

- It is a set of three important non-religious festivals of **Assam** – *Rongali or Bohag Bihu* observed in April, *Kongali or Kati Bihu* observed in October and *Magh or Bhogali Bihu* observed in January. *Rongali Bihu* is the most important among the three and it coincides with the Assamese New Year. Songs and dances are the main attractions during Bihu.

Bohag Bihu is one of the most popular festivals of **Assam**. Although the Assamese celebrate Bihu **thrice** in a year, the *Bohag Bihu* is the most anticipated one.



Bihu Festival

The festival of Bihu is traditionally tied to the **changing seasons** and **harvests**. The Bohag Bihu is celebrated for many days beginning from 14 April every year. The celebrations range from one week to almost a month depending on the communities' and tribes' decision.

- On the first day of the festival, cows and bulls that are the mainstay of the community are bathed and fed. This ceremony is called the 'Gora Bihu'.
- The second day is the main day of the celebrations that constitute Bihu, as people greet one another and exchange **Gamosa** (a hand-woven cotton towel) with their relatives. All the houses prepare **Pitha** or a traditional dish made of rice powder, flour, sesame, coconut and jaggery. They also organise stages where men and women from all communities come together to perform the Bihu dance.

Hornbill Festival

- It is one of the major **festivals** celebrated in **Nagaland**.
- It is a 10-day festival that begins on **1st December** every year. All the major Naga tribes attend this festival and congregate at the **Kisama Heritage Village**. **All the tribes** showcase their talent and cultural vividness through costumes, weapons, bows and arrows and headgears of the clans.
- This is also a good opportunity **to bring all the tribes together** and for the younger generation to bond.

Moatsu Mong Festival

- It is celebrated by the **Ao tribe** of **Nagaland** in the first week of May **after sowing is done**.
- The festival provides them a period of recreation and entertainment after the stressful work of clearing fields, burning jungles and sowing seeds. It is marked by songs and dances. A part of the celebration is **Sangpangtu** where a big fire is lit and women and men sit around it.

Yemshe Festival

- Again from **Nagaland**, it is a **harvest festival** celebrated mainly by the **Pochuri tribe**. Catching of frogs is prohibited during this festival. It is celebrated in **September**.

Kharchi Puja

- This Hindu festival primarily originates from the State of **Tripura**. While it began as a festival of the **royal family** of Tripura, currently even the common households celebrate this festival. It is celebrated over a week and takes place in the month of July. The festival is celebrated in the honour of the **Earth** and to worship 14 other deities.



Kharchi Puja

- Each year thousands of people trek to Chaturdasha temple in Agartala so that they can pay obeisance to the deities.

Cheiraoba Festival

- This festival is celebrated all across the state of **Manipur**, as it is the **New Year** according to the Manipuri tribes. It is celebrated in the month of April (it means the first day of the month *Sajibu*).
- The festival is also related to the domestic deity called **Sanamahi** worshipped by the **Meitei tribe**. The festival is usually conducted in the temple of Sanamahi, but every household cleans and buys new utensils and new clothes for the family members.

Wangala Festival (The 100 Drums Festival)

- The dominant **Garo tribe** primarily celebrates it in **Meghalaya**. The festival indicates the **beginning of winter** and is celebrated as a nod to the **post-harvest** season.

The festival is celebrated in honour of '**Misi Saljong**', a local deity who is considered to be generous. He is supposed to be the force behind the good things that happen to the community. This festival is a thanksgiving to him.

Drums, flutes and other orchestra instruments are played to create a festive ambience. It is also known as the '**100 Drums Festival**' as loud drum noises herald the beginning of the festival. The day is also set apart by the wonderful costumes worn by the participants. An extraordinary feature is the **feathered headgear** that is worn by everyone celebrating the festival and also reflects their clan's colour.



Wangala Festival

Kang Chingba (Ratha Yatra of Manipur)

- The festival of Kang Chingba is one of the biggest Hindu festivals celebrated in the state of **Manipur**. It is **similar** to the '**Jagannath Puri Rath Yatra**' and draws many antecedents from the same. It is a 10-day-long festival that is celebrated in the month of July every year.
- The *Yatra* begins from the very famous holy temple of Sri Govindajee situated in Imphal. The idols carved of wood and heavily decorated are carted around in massive chariots that are called '**Kang**'. These deities are then carried to another temple, and people dance through the night to celebrate the journey.

Ambubachi Mela

- It is held at **Kamakhya Temple** of Guwahati in the state of **Assam**. The festival falls in the month of June and is one of the major festivals in North-East India, so much so that it has been dubbed as the '**Mahakumbh of the East**'.
- The festival has been associated with **fertility rituals**, and many devotees come to seek the blessing of a child from the Goddess. The temple has courted controversy because of the alleged **tantric activities** conducted during this *mela*.

Sekrenyi Festival

- The festival of Sekrenyi is celebrated in the month of February by the **Angami tribe** of **Nagaland**.
- It is celebrated for over 10 days and is also called 'Phousanyi' by the Angamis. It is a purification festival.

Majuli Festival

- This is one of the more modern festivals held at Majuli in the state of **Assam**.
- The festival is organised in November, as it is the best time considering the alternating climatic conditions in Assam. The **Department for Culture** of Assam organises various events during the festival such as the seminars which highlight the traditional history and glory of Assam in general, and Majuli in particular.

Lui Ngai Ni Festival

- Almost all branches of the **Naga tribes** celebrate this festival. It is celebrated all over in **Nagaland** and in some of the Naga-inhabited parts of Manipur state too.
- It is celebrated to mark the **seed-sowing season**. The festival brings the agricultural branches of Naga tribes closer to the non-agricultural communities of Nagas.
- The festival is marked with a huge amount of celebration and pomp and show. It is a festival to bring communities closer and spread the message of **peace and harmony**.

Dree Festival

- The **Apatani tribe** that resides in **Arunachal Pradesh** primarily celebrate the festival. Currently, more and more tribes have started observing the rituals of the Dree festival.
- It is one of the biggest celebrations held in the **Ziro valley**.
- During the festival, people offer prayers and offerings to five main deities: **Tamu, Metw, Medvr, Danyi** and **Mepin**. These offerings are given to pray for a good and plentiful harvest. People gather around the valley and perform traditional dances. One of the most unique points of this festival is that **cucumber is distributed** to all the attendees as a symbol of good harvest.

Losar Festival

- It falls on the first day of the lunar calendar and is quite popular in **Arunachal Pradesh** (being mainly celebrated by **Monpa tribe** who practice agriculture and animal husbandry and follow Buddhism).
- Losar is a three-day festival and is celebrated with great pomp and show at **Tawang**.
- It is **also** celebrated in the **Ladakh region**.

Khan Festival

- It is a religious festival celebrated by the **Miji tribe of Arunachal Pradesh**.
- The festival is significant because it brings together people from all backgrounds **irrespective of their caste and creed** to celebrate it. During this, the priest **ties a piece of wool** around the neck of all the participants and the thread is considered sacred.

Lai Haraoba

It is a ritualistic festival celebrated by the **Meitei tribal community in Manipur**. It is celebrated to please **Umang Lai**, the traditional deities under **Sanamahism** religion. Umang Lai are the group of sacred groves preserved for the local forest deities (with the same title), worshipped since ancient times in Manipur.

Zo Kutpu

Zo Kutpu festival is celebrated in **Mizoram**. It intends to unify Mizo tribes living in different parts of the world.

Chapchar Kut Festival

It is celebrated in **Mizoram** during March after completion of the locals' most arduous task of jhum operation.

Dwijing Festival

The Dwijing Festival is an annual river festival celebrated on the banks of Aie river in Chirang District, **Assam**.

Solung Festival

It is an agriculture festival of the Adi Tribes in **Arunachal Pradesh**, to seek good harvest and prosperity.



Me-Dam-Me-Phi

This is the ancestor worship festival, celebrated by the **Ahom people** on 31st January each year in **Assam**.



Baishagu

This festival is celebrated by the tribe of 'Borokacharis' of **Assam**.



Ali-Aye-Ligang Festival

This festival is celebrated by the **Mishing community** in **Assam**. It is a seed-sowing and spring festival, observed for a great harvest.



Rongker and Chomangkan Festival

Rongker and Chomangkan are the two festivals of the **Karbis**, an indigenous tribe of Karbi Anglong in **Assam**.



Bare Saharia Bhaona

The Bare Saharia Bhaona is a community drama festival at Jamugurihat, **Assam**.

Other Important Festivals (State-wise)

State/UT	Festivals
Andhra Pradesh	Brahmotsavam
Arunachal Pradesh	Nyokum, Boori-Boot, Reh, Saung
Chhattisgarh	Bastar Dussehra
Goa	Shimga
Gujarat	Modhera Dance festival
Himachal Pradesh	Gochi Festival
Jammu and Kashmir	Bahu Mela, Chhari, Tulip festival, Hemis festival
Jharkhand	Rohini festival, Karam Puja
Karnataka	Kambala
Kerala	Thrissur Pooram temple festival, Vallam Kali Boat Race festival
Ladakh	Galdan Namchot, Dosmoche, Phyang Tsedup, Sindhu Darshan, Saka Dawa, Tak-Tok, Matho Nagrang, Stok Guru festival, Naropa festival*
Madhya Pradesh	Lokrang festival, Khajuraho Dance festival
Meghalaya	Nongkrem
Maharashtra	Wari-Warkari (by the Warkari community at Pandharpur), Elephanta festival, Nag Panchami

State/UT	Festivals
Manipur	Heikru Hidongba, Sangai, Kang Chingba, Chavang Kut
Mizoram	Anthurium, Chapchar Kut, Alphaloni
Nagaland	Naknyülüm, Mim Kut, Miu, Aoleang Monyu, Bushu Jiba, Tokhu Emong, Monyu, Tuluni, Mongmong
Odisha	Kandhei Jatra, Thakurani Jatra, Raja Parba, Nuakhai Juhar, Konark Dance festival
Tamil Nadu	Chithirai, Natyanjali, Jallikattu, Puthandu
Telangana	Sammakka Saralamma Jatara, Natyanjali, Bonalu
Uttarakhand	Nanda Devi Raj Jat Yatra, Phool Dei, Ganga Dussera

* **Naropa Festival (Kumbh of Himalayas)** is celebrated in **Ladakh** every 12 years as per the Tibetan calendar, in order to celebrate the life of **Buddhist philosopher and scholar Naropa** who lived during the 11th century AD and even taught at **Nalanda Mahavihara**.



Fairs of India

A fair is a temporary gathering of people for a variety of activities which may be religious, entertainment or commercial. In India, fairs of different kinds are organised in different parts of the country. Some of them are discussed below.



Kumbh Mela

- ✿ The Kumbh Mela is the largest religious gathering in the world. Every day during the mela millions of people come to take a dip in the holy river. The mela (gathering) is held on a rotational basis at **four auspicious Hindu pilgrimage sites - Prayagraj, Haridwar, Nashik-Trimbak and Ujjain**.
- ✿ According to Hindu mythology, during the 'Samudra Manthan', that is churning of the ocean, 'Amrit', that is drink of immortality, was produced and stored in a 'Kumbh' (pot). In the battle of the Devas and the Asuras, Lord Vishnu dropped drops of Amrit while transporting the Kumbh. These places are the four sites where the Kumbh Mela is held.
- ✿ The **mela is held** at any given place **after a time interval of 12 years**. The exact dates are determined according to the zodiac positions of the Sun, Moon and the planet Jupiter. At **Nashik and Ujjain**, if the mela is held when a planet is in Leo (Simha in Hindu astrology), it is called as **Simhastha Kumbh**.
- ✿ At **Haridwar and Prayagraj**, the Ardh-Kumbh Mela is held every sixth year.
- ✿ At this Kumbh Mela in 1915, **All-India Hindu Sabha** (later became Hindu Mahasabha) was found.



Kumbh Mela

Places where the Kumbh Mela is held:

Place	River
Prayagraj (Uttar Pradesh)	At the confluence of the Ganga, Yamuna and the mythical Saraswati
Haridwar (Uttarakhand)	Ganga
Nashik-Trimbak (Maharashtra)	Godavari
Ujjain (Madhya Pradesh)	Shipra

In 2017, Kumbh Mela was inscribed on the *Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity* by UNESCO.

Nagaur Fair

- It is celebrated in Nagaur, Rajasthan, for eight days in the months of January and February. Animals like horses, cows, bullocks, oxen and camels are traded in this fair. Animal races, cockfighting, dancing and singing in the night are the attractive events that take place in this fair.

Sonepur Mela

- It is one of the largest **cattle fairs** in Asia. The mela is held in **Sonepur, Bihar**, at the confluence of the River Ganga and the Gandak. It usually takes place in **November** on Kartik Poornima, a day considered auspicious by the Hindus.
- It is the only fair where large numbers of elephants are sold, and legend has it that Chandragupta Maurya used to buy elephants and horses during this fair.

Chitra Vichitra Fair

- It is the largest **tribal fair in Gujarat** celebrated mainly by the '**Garasia**' and '**Bhil**' tribes. The tribals wear their traditional costumes and showcase the local tribal culture.
- On the '**Amavasya**' after Holi, the tribal women go to the river to mourn for their near and dear departed ones. The festivities start from the next day. Lively dance performances, best of rural handicrafts and exquisite silver jewellery attract thousands of tourists every year.

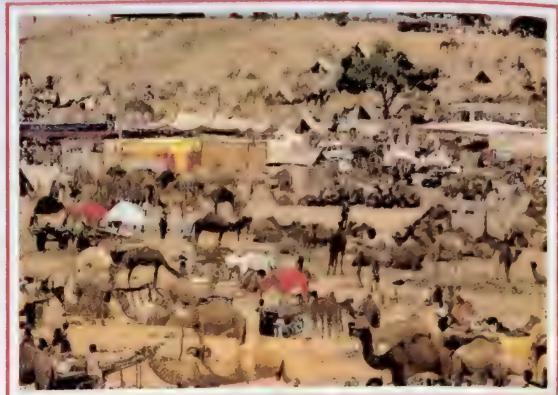
Shamlaji Fair

- It is celebrated by a **tribal community in Gujarat to revere Lord Shamlaji** 'the Dark Divine' who is thought to be the incarnate of Krishna or Vishnu. Devotees come in large numbers to worship the deity and take a holy bath in the **Meshwo River**.
- The '**Bhils**' have immense faith in the powers of Shamlaji who they lovingly call 'Kaliyo Dev'. It lasts for about three weeks in the month of November, with Kartik Poornima being the most important day of the fair.



Pushkar Fair

- Pushkar Mela is an annual fair in **Pushkar, Rajasthan**, starting on the day of 'Kartik Poornima' and lasts for about a week. It is one of the largest **camel and cattle fairs** in the world. It is a time when the Rajasthani farmers buy and sell their cattle, but most of the trading is completed in the days leading to the fair.
- When the festival actually begins, events such as camel races, moustache competitions, turban tying competitions, dancing and camel riding take centre stage.



Pushkar Fair, Rajasthan



Gangaur Fair

- This festival lasts for eighteen days. It is one of the most significant festivals for the women of **Rajasthan**. It is celebrated in the honour of Goddess Parvati, and it is believed that she is the Goddess of marital happiness.
- It is often accompanied by elephant processions, old palanquins, chariots, folk song and dance and ends with fireworks.



Desert Festival

- This three-day extravaganza takes place in **Jaisalmer** generally in the month of February. The festival showcases the vibrant culture of Rajasthan.
- It gives the tourists a local flavour and showcases different facets of Rajasthani culture. Among the golden sands of Rajasthan, tourists can enjoy colourful folk dances, trips to the sand dunes, tying competitions and, camel rides, among others.



Desert Festival, Rajasthan



Kolayat Fair (Kapil Muni Fair)

- Kolayat fair is held in **Bikaner, Rajasthan**. On the day of Kartik Poornima, people come to take a dip in the holy **Kolayat Lake** to get respite from all their sins.
- The fair is named after the great sage Kapila Muni who undertook intense meditation for the benefit of humanity. A large **cattle fair is also organised**.



Kolayat Fair, Rajasthan

Surajkund Crafts Fair

- ★ This is an international crafts fair held annually for a fortnight in February near Faridabad, **Haryana**.
- ★ It showcases the regional as well as international crafts and cultural heritage. Traditional craftsmen from all parts of India participate in this festival. Pottery, weaving, sculptures, embroidery, papier-mâché, bamboo and cane crafts along with metal and wooden works attract a lot of attention.



Surajkund Crafts Fair, Haryana

Baneshwar Fair

- ★ It is an annual tribal fair held in Dungarpur district of **Rajasthan**. It is held in the month of January or February near the confluence of the Som and Mahi rivers. It is a major fair in tribal culture and is often described as 'the Kumbh Mela of the tribals'.

Gangasagar Mela

- ★ It is conducted in the month of January–February at the mouth of the river Hooghly (southern tip of Sagar Island) in **West Bengal**. A holy dip in the Ganges especially on the day of **Makar Sankranti** is considered very auspicious by the Hindus.
- Lakhs of pilgrims throng the site. The presence of **Naga Sadhus** lends a unique identity to the fair.

The famous **Kapil Muni Temple** is located on Sagar Island.

Goa Carnival

- ★ The **Portuguese introduced** the Goa Carnival in India. It takes place 40 days before **Lent**, a period of abstinence and spirituality.
- ★ It involves feasting and merrymaking. People wear masks and come onto the streets to party. It showcases the rich Goan heritage and culture and has a distinct Portuguese influence.

Jaydev Kenduli Mela

Jaydev Kenduli is a village in the Birbhum District of West Bengal. It is considered as a possible birthplace of the poet Jayadeva (believed to be the court poet of Raja Lakshman Sen), who composed *Gita Govinda* in Sanskrit. In memory of Jayadeva, a fair is organised on the occasion of Makar Sankranti.

Chillai Kalan

It refers to a **40-day period of harsh winter** in **Kashmir** (from 21 December to 29 January every year). Chillai Kalan is followed by a 20-day-long Chillai Khurd and 10-day-long Chillai Bachha. Chillai Kalan is celebrated with sumptuous **Harissa** (*hot meaty stew*). The first day of 'Chillai Kalan' is named as '**World Pheran Day**', where a traditional pheran (long woollen gown for males and females) is worn as **protection against the cold**.

CHAPTER SUMMARY

- ❖ **Festivals under restricted list** – holiday is decided by the employer.
- ❖ **National festivals** – occurrence of great historical events of national importance – India celebrates three national festivals – Republic Day (26th January), Independence Day (15th August) and Gandhi Jayanti (2nd October).
- ❖ **Religious festivals** – associated with a specific community – no restrictions on other communities to celebrate.
- ❖ **Sair-e-Gul Faroshan** – patronised by Mughal Emperor Akbar II in the 19th century – annual three-day festival of flowers – conducted in Delhi.
- ❖ **Kumbh Mela** – largest religious gathering – held on rotational basis – at Prayagraj, Haridwar, Nashik- Trimbak and Ujjain – UNESCO's Intangible Cultural Heritage.



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CHAPTER

CALENDARS IN INDIA



Introduction

A **calendar** is a system of organising days for social, religious, commercial or administrative purposes. This is done by giving names to periods of time, typically *day*, *week*, *month* and *year*. A date is the designation of a single, specific day within such a system. A calendar is also a physical record (often paper) of such a system. The word '**Calendar**' is derived from the Roman word '**Calends**' or '**Kalends**', which is the first day of every month in the Roman calendar. The calendar represents the practice of indicating time in terms of the movement of the Sun, the Earth and the Moon.

The calendar is believed to have existed in the human civilisation for quite a long time. The **Sumerians** are credited for framing the first calendar based on a year divided into 12 months, each having 29 or 30 days.

In India, various systems have come into vogue at different times to mark the commencement of a new year. The systems adopted to frame calendars across the various regions of India belong to any of the following three types:

- Solar System
- Lunar System
- Luni-Solar System

These systems followed in the various calendars are based on astronomical years, which follows the movement of celestial bodies. It is these systems which provide the below discussed names:

● **Solar Year** – The solar year represents the time taken by the Earth revolving in its orbit around the Sun, going through a point of the ecliptic, i.e., solstice or equinox, to which it returns after completing its journey. The solar year consists of **365 days, 5 hours, 48 minutes and 46 seconds**. This system maintains the closest correspondence between the year and the seasons. The solar year has **12 months** in total. There are two types of Solar Year as discussed below:

- ❖ **Tropical Year (Sayana Year)**: It is derived from the Greek word 'tropia', meaning the turning points. The name 'Tropical Year' refers to the changes of seasons that remain fixed in this kind of year. The **Gregorian calendar** is based on Tropical Year.
- ❖ **Sidereal Year (Nirayana Year)**: The Sidereal Year is the actual time required for the Earth to revolve around the Sun once, with respect to a starting point on the ecliptic. The **Bengali calendar** is based on the Sidereal or Nirayana system.

● **Lunar Year** – The lunar year, like the solar year, consists of **12 months** or lunations. However, each lunation is a synodic month as measured by the period falling between two successive full moons or new moons. Since a lunar month varies from 29.26 to 29.80 days, it gives a period of **354 days**, necessarily **short of 11 days, to the solar year**.

● **Luni-Solar Year** – In the luni-solar year, the year is calculated by the solar cycle and the months by the lunar divisions as in the Hindu calendars, the adjustment between the two is brought about by intercalation and suppression of days and months. This difference of 11 days is accounted for by an intercalation or suppression, to make the lunar year conform to the solar year. An **intercalary month** is introduced every 2 years and 6 months in the lunar year to adjust it to the solar year. This extra month or intercalary month is called **Adhik Maas**.

Let us now discuss the **various months** which exist within these three systems:

● **Solar Month** – In the solar year, the months are 12 in number and bear the names of the 12 zodiac signs called *Rashis* or mansions by which they are also known in some parts of India. These twelve *rashis* are *Mesh*, the ram (Aries); *Vrishabham*, the bull (Taurus); *Mithuna*, the pairs (Gemini); *Karka*, the crab (Cancer); *Simha*, the lion (Leo); *Kanya*, the maiden (Virgo); *Tula*, the scales (Libra); *Vrischika*, the scorpion (Scorpio); *Dhanus*, the bow (Sagittarius); *Makara*, the sea monster (Capricorn); *Kumbha*, the water pot (Aquarius) and *Meena*, the fish (Pisces).



Twelve Zodiac Signs

Lunar Month – It ends either with a new moon (*amavasya*) or with a full moon (*purnima*). There are two methods for the commencement of the month under the lunar system. They are either *Amasanta* or *Purnimanta*, i.e., they commence either with the bright fortnight (Bright-half) or with the dark fortnight (Dark-half) on the day following either the new moon or the full moon, respectively.

Out of the two types of months described above, it is the lunar month or the **moon month which is followed in most parts of the nation.**

Adhik Maas

Adhik Maas is the **intercalary month** added to a lunar year after every 2 years and 6 months in order to **adjust the difference** of the lunar year with the solar year to ensure that the natural events and cycle of seasons which occurred in particular months are not disturbed by falling into different months. *Lunar year comprises of 354 days* and hence falls short of 11 days every year with regard to a solar year. In order to adjust these 11 days, *Adhik Maas* or *Mal Maas* is added to the Lunar Calendar after every 2 years and 6 months.

The Sun passes from one rashī to another every month. The apparent motion of the Sun not being uniform, the time by which the Sun passes through different rashis is not always the same. This entry of the Sun into a zodiac sign is called a *Sankramana* or *Sankranti*, which occurs every month. There are 12 such sankramnas in a year. It, however, so happens sometimes that the Sun does not pass through any of the rashis during one of the lunar months, and two consecutive moon days come between the two – one sankranti and another when the Adhik Maas is introduced. In other words, we can say that Adhik Maas is the month during which there is **no sankranti**.

On the other hand, the month during which there are two surya-sankrantis is called **Kshaya Maas**, i.e., the month which is *deleted* or dropped.

The months in the various calendar forms are divided into *Pakshas* or fortnights, weeks and days. The **two Pakshas or fortnights** under Lunar Calendar are as follows:

- ◆ **Shukla Paksha** (the bright half) which starts with the day following the new moon, and
- ◆ **Krishna Paksha** (the dark half) which starts with the day following the full moon.

The **lunar day is called *Tithi* or *Vasara*** whereas **the solar day is called *Divasa***.

The duration of a *tithi* or the lunar day is **shorter than** the *divasa* or solar day covering day and night from one sunrise to another. The average duration of ***tithi*** is 23 hours and 37 minutes, which is **23 minutes less** than a *divasa* or solar day.

The ***Tithi* is further divided into *Ghatika*, *Pala* and *Vipala*** and is related to the Gregorian calendar in the following manner:

- ◆ One day and night = 1 *divasa* = 24 hours = 60 *ghatikas*
- ◆ One *ghatika* = 60 *palas* = 24 minutes
- ◆ One *pala* = 60 *vipalas* = 24 seconds
- ◆ Two *ghatikas* = 1 *Muhurta* = 48 minutes

Thus, 2.5 *muhurtas* are equal to 2 hours.

Hindu Calendar

Panchanga or the Hindu calendar takes into account panch, i.e., five angas or limbs, viz. year, month, paksha, tithi and ghatika or alternatively, tithi, vaara, nakshatra, yoga and karana.

The 12 places or rashis through which the Sun passes during a year are named after a group of stars referred to as Nakshatras. There are **28 nakshatras or constellations** in total. Nakshatras, being unequal in size, do not have the same number of stars, some have even one or two. *Each rashī consists of two to three nakshatras*.

The solar year is divided into two halves under the Hindu Calendar:

- **Uttarayana** – First six months from Makara Sankranti to Karka Sankranti, i.e., from Paush (January) to Ashadh (June), is the God's Day.
- **Dakshinayana** – Last six months from July to December is God's night.

One solar year thus equals one day and one night of the God.

The Four Eras or Yugas

According to Hindu beliefs, Yuga refers to an epoch or era with a four age cycle. The four age cycles or Yugas in ascending order are as follows:

1. **Satya Yuga** or Krita Yuga equals 1,728,000 years
2. **Treta Yuga** equals 1,296,000 years
3. **Dvapara Yuga** equals 864,000 years
4. **Kali Yuga** equals 432,000 years

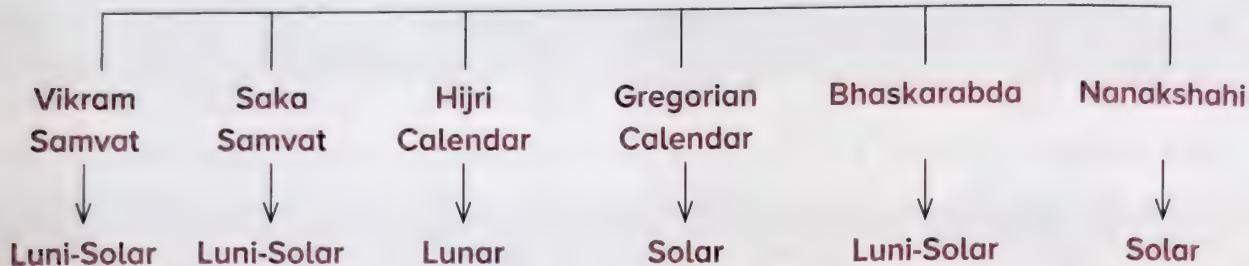
The presently running Yuga is Kali Yuga, which started in 3102 BC. These four Yugas constitute one **Mahayuga** and equals 4.32 million human years. There are 1,000 Mahayugas in one day of Brahma or 4.32 billion human years. A **Mahakalpa** consists of 100 years of Brahma.

1. **Krita Yuga or Satya Yuga:** It is the first Yuga and is called the Golden Yuga. It was the age of truth and perfection as there existed one religion, and all men were saintly. There was no requirement to perform religious ceremonies and all mankind could attain supreme blessedness. There was no agriculture or mining as the earth yielded those riches on its own. The weather was pleasant and everyone was happy. There were no religious sects. There was no disease or fear of anything.
2. **Treta Yuga:** Virtue diminished slightly in this second Yuga. Many emperors rose to dominance and conquered the world. Wars became frequent and the weather showed extremities. Oceans and deserts were formed. Agriculture, labour and mining came into existence. The average life span of humans reduced to 1,000–10,000 years.
3. **Dvapara Yuga:** People become tainted with tamasic qualities and were not as strong as their ancestors. Diseases became rampant. Humans were discontent and fought with each other. The average life span of humans reduced to a few centuries.
4. **Kali Yuga:** This represents the final age. It is the age of darkness and ignorance. People become sinners and lack virtue. They become slaves to their passions and are barely as powerful as their earliest ancestors in the Satya or Krita Yuga. The average life span of people is barely 100 years, though, by the end of the Yuga, it will be as low as 20 years.



Classification of Indian Calendar Forms

In India, various forms of calendars came into use based on the various eras to which they relate. They are discussed below:



● **Vikram Samvat:** The Vikram era started 57 years before the Christian era, i.e., around **57 BC**, and is in force in almost all of India except the region of Bengal. It is one of the two official calendars used in Nepal. This era, as historians believe, is said to have been established by King Vikramaditya of Ujjain to commemorate his victory over the Saka rulers. Many historians, however believe that Vikram Samvat was originally instituted by the Malwa Ganarajya and hence known as Malwa Gana era, and that it was named after Chandragupta Vikramaditya when he conquered Malwa around 400 AD. It is a **luni-solar calendar** based on ancient Hindu traditions.

The Calendar is 56.7 years ahead of the solar Gregorian calendar. The new year begins with the first day after the new moon, in the month of *Chaitra* which usually falls in the month of March–April in the Gregorian calendar. In Nepal, it begins in mid-April marking the start of the solar new year. It has **354 days** in a year divided into **12 months**, namely *Chaitra*, *Vaisakha*, *Jyaistha*, *Asadha*, *Shravana*, *Bhadra*, *Asvina*, *Kartika*, *Agrahayana*, *Pausa*, *Magha* and *Phalguni*. For most parts of the Indian territory, the Vikram era starts with Chaitra as the first month. The Vikram Samvat has been adopted as the official calendar in **Nepal**.

Each month is divided into **two halves (fortnight)** – the *bright half* and the *dark half*. To adjust the **difference of 11 days** with the solar year, Vikram Samvat has an extra month added known as *Adhik Maas* after a cycle of every 3 years and every 5 years, 13 months. The **zero year** under Vikram Samvat is **57 BC**.

● **Saka Samvat:** This calendar form is believed to have been initiated by King Shalivahana in **78 AD**. It was also known as the Saka era as it is to this tribe that Shalivahana belonged. Historians do have a confusion as to whether Shalivahana was Saka himself or whether he conquered the Sakas.

Like Vikram Samvat, the Saka Calendar is also **both solar and lunar**, with lunar months and a solar year, and has the same number of months as the Vikram era has. However, the months commence in different periods here. Its zero year begins near the vernal equinox of the year 78 AD. The Saka Calendar begins on **22nd March every year** except in Gregorian leap years when it starts on 21st March.

Saka calendar has a year with a fixed number of days in each month. However, the *names of months in both calendars are the same*. The Saka calendar starts with Chaitra followed by Vaisakha, Jyaistha, Asadha, Shravana, Bhadra, Asvina, Kartika, Agrahayana, Pausa, Magha and Phalguni. The number of days in a Saka year is **365**.

❖ **Hijri Calendar:** This calendar is of Arabic origin. Previously termed as *Amulfil*, it changed to Hijri or Hejira after the death of Prophet Mohammed to commemorate his Hijra, from Mecca to Medina, which took place in the 52nd year of his life in **622 AD**. This year became the *zero year* for the Hijri era. A year under this calendar is **lunar** and is divided into **12 months**, contributing **354 days** to the year.

The **day commences with a sunset** in this calendar. This calendar was adopted in India during the reign of the Muslim rulers. The **12 months** under the Hijri era are as follows:

Muharram (first month – 1st Muharram is the Islamic New Year); **Safar; Rabi-al-awwal; Rabi-ath-thani; Jumada-al-ula; Jumada-al-akhirah; Rajab; Shaban; Ramadan** (ninth month when people keep fasts for purification of the soul); **Shawwal** (1st Shawwal is celebrated as *Eid-ul-Fitr*); **Dhu-al-Qadah; Dhu-al-Hijjah** (last month dedicated to pilgrimage to *Mecca* or *Hajj*, the days of significance being from the 8th to 13th).

Out of these 12 months, **four months are considered sacred: 1st, 7th, 11th and 12th**.

The months are completely lunar and occur in such a sequence that there is no relation whatsoever either to the cycle of the seasons or the solar year, as the difference between the solar year and the lunar year is *not adjusted* under the Hijri calendar. Thus, it *falls short of one year every 33 years* compared to the Gregorian calendar which is based on a solar year.

❖ **Gregorian Calendar** – This calendar is based on the birthday of the founder of Christianity, Jesus Christ. It is a **solar year** commencing from the first day of January and consists of **365 days, 5 hours, 48 minutes and 46 seconds**.

Since these extra hours could not be included in the calendar for a year, the device of intercalation was adopted and the system of adding one day every four years to the month of February came into vogue. The year under this calendar form is known as a **civil year**.

❖ **Bhaskarabda** – In 2019, the Assam government announced the usage of **Bhaskarabda in the official calendar**, in addition to Saka and Gregorian calendars. Bhaskarabda era is **counted from the date of the ascension of Bhaskaravarman**, a 7th-century local ruler of the **Kamrupa kingdom** who was a contemporary of northern Indian ruler **Harshavardhana**.

Unlike Gregorian, where a day starts at midnight, the Assamese calendar begins and ends at sunrise over 24 hours. While the **Gregorian calendar** is counted on the **solar cycle**, the **Saka and Bhaskarabda use a lunisolar system** based on both the phases of the moon and the solar year.

❖ **Nanakshahi Calendar** – This is a **solar calendar** used in Sikhism, named after the founder of the Sikh religion, Guru Nanak Dev. It is based on the '**Barah Maha**' (Twelve Months), a composition by the Sikh gurus reflecting the changes in nature conveyed in the twelve-month cycle of the year. The year begins with the month of **Chet**, with 1 Chet corresponding to **14 March**. The commencement of the Nanakshahi calendar is the year of **birth of Guru Nanak**.

Dev, corresponding to the year 1469 CE. This calendar is based on Gurbani names of the months taken from the Guru Granth Sahib.

The Zoroastrian Calendar era commenced from **632 AD**. Parsis in India use the **Shahenshahi Calendar**, unlike Iranians who use the Qadimi Calendar. Under the Shahenshahi Calendar, **Nowruz** or new year usually occurs on March 20/21/22. Nowruz is the day of the vernal equinox.

Intercalation: It is insertion of days or months into a calendar to bring it into line with the solar year (year of the seasons). One example is the periodic inclusion of leap-year day (February 29) in the Gregorian calendar.

Sundial: It is the earliest type of **timekeeping device**, which indicates the time of day by the position of the shadow of some object exposed to the rays of the sun. With the progress of time in a day, the sun moves across the sky which causes the shadow of the object to move and indicate the passage of time.

With the advent of mechanical clocks in the early 14th century, sundials with equal hours were gradually developed in Europe, and until the 19th century, sundials were used to reset the mechanical clocks.

In India, sundials can be found in the Jantar Mantars, which are located in five cities, viz. **New Delhi, Jaipur, Ujjain, Mathura and Varanasi**. **The largest stone sundial in the world is located in the Jantar Mantar of Jaipur**, built by the Rajput king Sawai Jai Singh II in 1734.



National Calendar of India

The **Saka Calendar** used as the official civil calendar in the country is the National Calendar of India. This calendar is based on the **ascension of King Shalivahan** to the throne in **78 AD**.

It is used, through notification in the Official Gazette by the Government of India, in news broadcasts by All India Radio, and in calendars and communication documents issued under the control of the Government of India. The Saka calendar, which is one of the Hindu calendars was originally named as Saka Samvat and used for the calculation of days of religious significance in the Hindu Religion. A normal year in the Saka calendar consists of 365 days, with Chaitra as its first month.

The Saka calendar was adopted as the National Calendar on 22nd March 1957 by the **Calendar Reforms Committee** set up by the Government of India, along with the Gregorian calendar for official purposes. The Committee made efforts to coincide the astronomical data and harmonise the usage of this calendar after rectification of some local errors.

It came into use from **22 March 1957**, according to the Gregorian calendar, which was actually **1 Chaitra 1879** according to the Saka Samvat. It was adopted as the National Calendar of India in order to synchronise the usage of 30 different kinds of calendars in use in India at the time.



The Digital Calendar and Diary of the Government of India

It was launched by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting in 2021. The Digital Calendar of the Government of India is in line with the Vision of '**Digital India**' and can be accessed through any smartphone in the form of a **mobile application**. The app has been developed by the National Informatics Centre (NIC).

The app has a special feature of a diary which makes it more advanced. It is currently available in Hindi and English languages, and in 11 other regional languages.

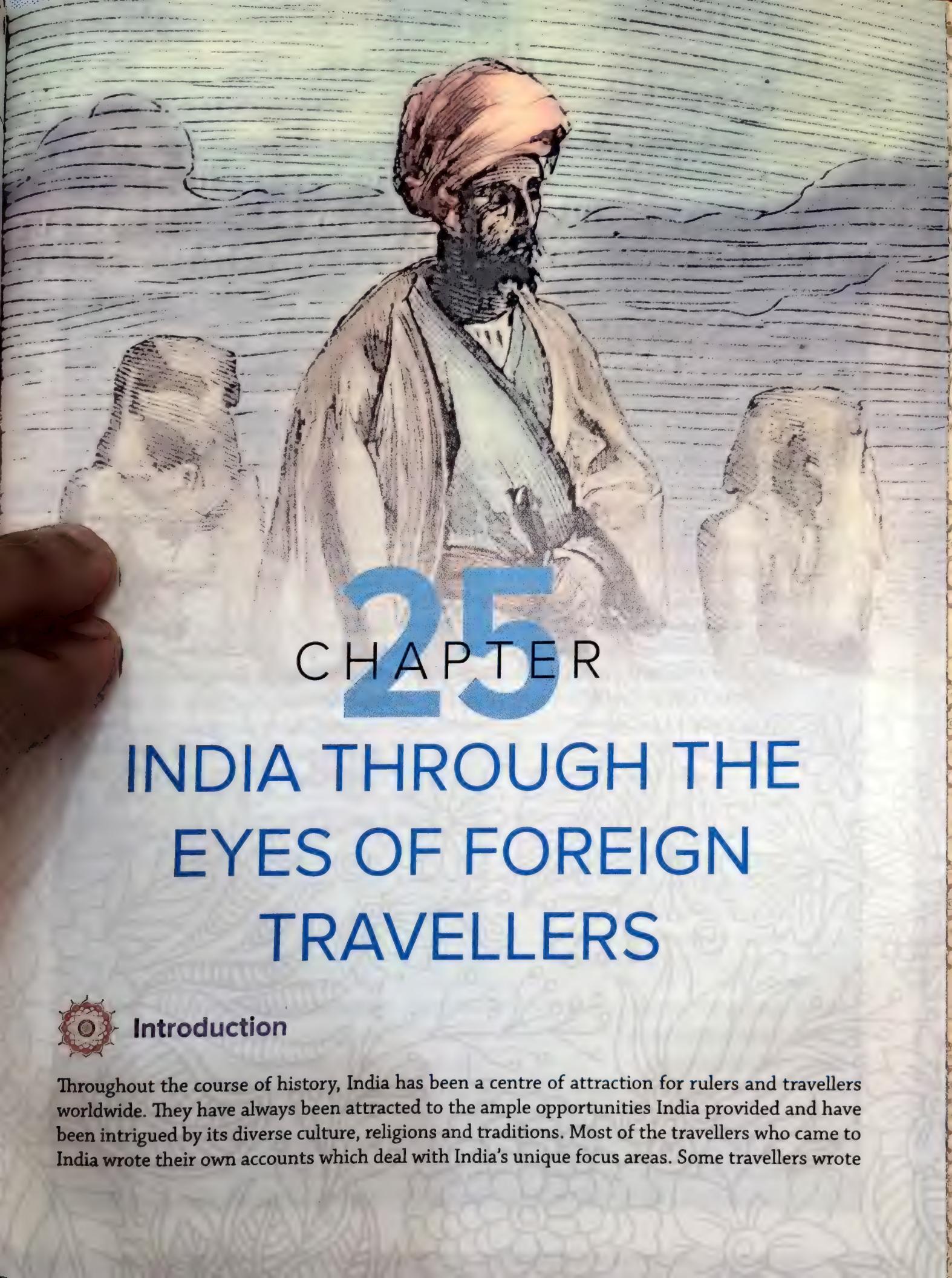
This application has the following features:

- Latest information on various schemes, events and publications of the Government of India.
- Official holidays and various important dates.
- Inspirational and motivational messages from great personalities of India.
- Provision for taking notes digitally which will be stored with cutting-edge security and privacy measures.
- Provision for scheduling of meetings and setting reminders for important tasks and events.

CHAPTER SUMMARY

- **Calendar** – system of organising days for social, religious, commercial or administrative purposes.
- **Date** – designation of a single, specific day within a system of calendar.
- **System adopted to frame calendars:** Solar System – Lunar System – Luni-Solar System.
- **Solar year** – 365 days, 5 hours, 48 minutes and 46 seconds. There are two types of Solar Year – Tropical Year (Sayana Year) and Sidereal Year (Nirayana Year).
- **Lunar Year** – consists of 354 days.
- **Months** – divided into Pakshas: *Shukla Paksha* (the bright half) – *Krishna Paksha* (the dark half).
- **Tithi** – divided into Ghatika, Pala and Vipala.
- **Yuga** – an epoch or era – Satya Yuga or Krita Yuga equals 1,728,000 years – Treta Yuga equals 1,296,000 years – Dvapara Yuga equals 864,000 years – Kali Yuga equals 432,000 years.
- **Vikram Samvat** – Luni-solar calendar – started in 57 BC – in force in almost all of India except the region of Bengal.
- **Saka Samvat** – Luni-solar calendar – believed to have been initiated King Shalivahana in 78 AD – begins on 22nd March every year except in Gregorian leap years when it starts on 21st March.
- **Hijri Calendar** – lunar calendar – 622 AD – the zero year for the Hijri era – day commences with a sunset.
- **Gregorian Calendar** – solar calendar – consists of 365 days, 5 hours, 48 minutes and 46 seconds.

- **Sundial** – earliest type of timekeeping device – indicates the time of day by the position of the shadow of some object exposed to the rays of the sun – largest stone sundial in the world is located in the Jantar Mantar of Jaipur.
- **National Calendar of India** – is the Saka Calendar along with Gregorian calendar which was adopted on 22nd March 1957.
- **The Digital Calendar and Diary of the Government of India** – application for smartphone – launched by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting in 2021.



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CHAPTER

INDIA THROUGH THE EYES OF FOREIGN TRAVELLERS



Introduction

Throughout the course of history, India has been a centre of attraction for rulers and travellers worldwide. They have always been attracted to the ample opportunities India provided and have been intrigued by its diverse culture, religions and traditions. Most of the travellers who came to India wrote their own accounts which deal with India's unique focus areas. Some travellers wrote

about the affairs of the court, while some focused on the contemporary style of architecture and monuments or depicted social and economic life. Every account presents a true picture of the then Indian Civilisation.

In the ancient and medieval period, many prominent travellers visited India and recorded their observations. A key point to note is that **no such major account of any woman traveller is available**.

Foreign Travellers at a Glance

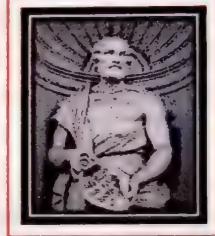
Sl. No.	Name (Nationality)	Time Period	Visited during the Reign of (Dynasty/Ruler)
1.	Deimachus (Greek)	320–273 BC	Mauryan Period (Bindusara)
2.	Megasthenes (Greek)	302–298 BC	Mauryan Period (Chandragupta Maurya)
3.	Heliodorus (Greek)	113 BC	Shunga Dynasty (Bhagabhadra)
4.	Fa-Hien (Chinese)	402–411 AD	Gupta Period (Chandragupta II)
5.	Hiuen Tsang (Chinese)	627–643 AD	Pusyabhuti Dynasty (Harshavardhana)
6.	I-tsing/Yijing (Chinese)	671–695 AD	Harsha period
7.	Al-Sulaiman (Persian)	850 AD	Pratihara Dynasty (Mihira Bhoja)
8.	Al-Masudi (Arab)	956 AD	–
9.	Al-Biruni (Khwarazm)	1024–30 AD	–
10.	Marco Polo (Italian)	1289–93 AD	Pandya Dynasty as well as Kakatiya Dynasty (Rudramadevi)
11.	Ibn Battuta (Moroccan)	1333–47 AD	Tughlaq Dynasty (Muhammad Bin Tughlaq)
12.	Shihabuddin al-Umari (Damascus)	1348 AD	–
13.	Niccolò de' Conti (Venetian)	1420–21 AD	Vijayanagara Empire (Deva Raya I)
14.	Abdur Razzaq (Persian)	1443–44 AD	Vijayanagara Empire (Deva Raya II)
15.	Athanasius Nikitin (Russian)	1470–74 AD	Bahmani Kingdom (Muhammad Shah III)
16.	Bartholomew Diaz (Italian)	1503–08 AD	–
17.	Duarte Barbosa (Portuguese)	1516–18 AD	Vijayanagara Empire (Krishnadeva Raya)
18.	Domingo Paoes (Portuguese)	1520–22 AD	Vijayanagara Empire (Krishnadeva Raya)
19.	Fernao Nuniz (Portuguese)	1535–37 AD	Vijayanagara Empire (Achyuta Deva Raya)
20.	Cesar Frederick (Italian)	1563–81 AD	Vijayanagara Empire
21.	Antonio Monserrate (Portuguese)	1578–82 AD	Mughal Empire (Akbar)
22.	Jan Huyghen van Linschoten (Dutch)	1583–88 AD	Visited Goa. Wrote the book <i>Itinerario</i> having detailed maps of voyages.
23.	Ralph Fitch (First English Traveller)	1585–91 AD	Mughal Empire (Akbar)
24.	William Hawkins (British)	1608–11 AD	Mughal Empire (Jahangir)
25.	William Fisch (British)	1608–12 AD	Mughal Empire (Jahangir)
26.	Thomas Coryat (English)	1612–17 AD	Mughal Empire (Jahangir)
27.	Sir Thomas Roe (British)	1615–19 AD	Mughal Empire (Jahangir)
28.	Pal Canning (English)	1615–25 AD	Mughal Empire (Jahangir)
29.	Edward Terry (English)	1616 AD	Mughal Empire (Jahangir)
30.	Pietro della Valle (Italian)	1622 AD	King Venkatappa Nayaka of Keladi, South India

Sl. No.	Name (Nationality)	Time Period	Visited during the Reign of (Dynasty/Ruler)
31.	Francisco Pelsaert (Dutch)	1620–27 AD	—
32.	John Fryer (English)	1627–1681 AD	Mughal Empire (Shah Jahan)
33.	Peter Mundy (British)	1630–34 AD	Mughal Empire (Shah Jahan)
34.	Johan Albrecht de Mandelslo (German)	1638 AD	Mughal Empire (Shah Jahan)
35.	Jean-Baptiste Tavernier (French)	1638–43 AD	Mughal Empire (Shah Jahan)
36.	Nicolao Manucci (Italian)	1653–1708 AD (didn't return back)	Timurid Dynasty (Dara Shikoh)
37.	François Bernier (French)	1656–1717 AD	Timurid Dynasty (Dara Shikoh)
38.	Jean de Thévenot (French)	1666 AD	Mughal Empire (Aurangzeb)
39.	Giovanni Francesco Gemelli Careri (Italian)	1695 AD	Mughal Empire (Aurangzeb)
33.	Jean-Antoine Dubois (French)	1792–1823 AD	—

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF SOME OF THE MOST IMPORTANT TRAVELLERS

Megasthenes | Indica

Megasthenes was an ancient **Greek historian**, diplomat and explorer in the **Hellenistic period**. He was born around 350 BC. Megasthenes visited India between 302 and 288 BC as an ambassador of Greek general **Seleucus I Nicator**. He visited the Maurya capital **Pataliputra** during the reign of **Chandragupta Maurya**, who was the founder of the Maurya dynasty. He described India in his book **Indica**. Unfortunately, the original copy of this book was lost. Later, famous Greek writers such as **Arrian**, **Strabo**, **Diodorus** and **Pliny** referred to *Indica* in their works. Modern Greek scholar **E. A. Schwanbeck** collected several fragments of Megasthenes' works, and based on his collection, **John Watson McCrindle** published a reconstructed version of *Indica* in 1887.



Indica described the sub-continent as a quadrilateral-shaped country, bounded by the ocean on the Southern and eastern side. It also provides details of the soils, rivers, plants, animals, administration and social and religious life of India.

His book also communicated that Indians worshipped **Lord Krishna** during that time, and there existed **seven castes** in India. He founded two major aspects of the Indian caste system, i.e., **endogamy** and **hereditary occupation**. Megasthenes claimed that slavery was absent in India and there were no incidences of famine there. He was influenced by **Herodotus'** classification of **Egyptian society**.

The major faults of Megasthenes' work were:

- *The uncritical acceptance of Indian folklore.*
- *A tendency to idealise Indian culture from a Greek philosophical point of view.*



Deimachus

Deimachus of Plataea came as an ambassador to Bindusāra or Amitraghāta, the son and successor of Chandragupta Maurya. He had given some important information about the contemporary society and polity prevalent during that time. He was sent by Antiochus I (son of Seleucus Nikator).



Heliodorus | Khamba Baba

Heliodorus was an **Indo-Greek ambassador** sent by Antialcidas (Indo-Greek King of Taxila) to the court of Bhagabhadra (5th ruler of the Shunga dynasty) in Vidisha, Madhya Pradesh, around 113 BC.

He is famed for erecting a pillar at Vidisha, Madhya Pradesh. This pillar (which still exists) is locally called the '**Khamba Baba**' or '**Heliodorus Pillar**'. This Garuda pillar was set up by Heliodorus in honour of the Hindu god Vasudeva (Vishnu). The inscriptions at this pillar site are known as **Besnagar inscriptions**.

From these inscriptions it is noted that Heliodorus **adopted Hinduism** (Vaishnava) and stylised himself as '**Bhagavata**' (follower of the Vaishnava sect).



Heliodorus Pillar



Fa-Hien | Record of Buddhist Kingdoms

Fa-Hien was a Chinese pilgrim who visited India during the Gupta period around 400 AD during the period of **Chandragupta II (Vikramaditya)**. He came to visit various Buddhist monasteries and took the copy of religious texts. He visited Peshawar, Taxila, Mathura, Kannauj, Sravasti, Kapilavastu, Sarnath and many other places. He compiled a travelogue '**Record of Buddhist Kingdoms**'. His book details the *religious and social life* of Indians at that time.



The following aspects of India can also be found in his book:

- *Buddhism and Hinduism were the most popular religions at that time. Buddhism was more popular in Punjab, Bengal and the region around Mathura.*
- *He studied the Sanskrit Language in Pataliputra.*
- *He described internal and foreign trade of India as well as its ports.*
- *India had trade relations with China, countries of South-East Asia, Western Asia as well as Europe.*



Hiuen Tsang | SI-YU-KI

He was a Chinese traveller, Buddhist scholar, monk and translator. He came to India through the **Silk Route** between **629 and 644 AD** during the reign of **Harshavardhana**. He was also known as **Xuanzang** and the **Prince of Pilgrims**. From his famous book **Si-Yu-Ki: Buddhist Record of the Western World**, details of administrative, political, religious, economic and social conditions during that period in India can be found. However, the descriptions were biased so as to glorify Buddhism and praise King Harshavardhana.



Some important points to remember:

- ✿ In *Si-Yu-Ki*, he described mainly the **city life** in India (in terms of construction of various types of houses, city streets and the like, specially of Kannauj)
- ✿ As per his account, Prayag was a prominent city, and the importance of Pataliputra was replaced by Harshavardhana's capital **Kannauj**. Sravasti and Kapilavastu had lost their religious importance and instead **Nalanda (Bihar)** and **Vallabhi (Gujarat)** became the centres of learning.
- ✿ As per his text, Harsha divided state's income into four parts:
 - (i) 1/4th for routine administrative expenditure of the state.
 - (ii) 1/4th to pay government employees.
 - (iii) 1/4th to scholars.
 - (iv) 1/4th as charity to Brahmin and Buddhist monks.
- ✿ He, however, narrated that travelling was not safe during that time.
- ✿ According to Hiuen Tsang, Harsha was quite laborious and a welfare-focused leader.
- ✿ During his stay, Hiuen Tsang visited Kashmir, Punjab, Kapilavastu, Bodh Gaya, Sarnath, and Kushinagar. He also travelled through the Deccan, Odisha and Bengal.
- ✿ He spent 5 years at the **University of Nalanda** and studied under **Acharya Shilabhadra**.
- ✿ His journey to India was recorded in detail in the classic Chinese text **Great Tang Records on the Western Regions**.



I-tsing | A Record of the Buddhist Religion

Yijing/I-tsing was a **Chinese Buddhist monk** who stayed in India from 671 to 695 AD to study in **Nalanda Mahavihara**. He explained that the Buddhists of Northern India and the islands of the South Seas followed Hinayana Buddhism, and the Buddhists in China and Malayu followed Mahayana Buddhism. According to him, there were only four principal schools that follow traditional Buddhism. These schools were: **Mahasamghika, Sthavira, Mulasarvastivada** and



Sammitiya Nikayas. He translated many Pali and Sanskrit Buddhist texts into Chinese, which include the Mulasarvastivada Vinaya, Golden Light Sutra, Diamond Sutra and Avadanas.



Sulaiman al-Tajir

He was a 9th-century **Persian** Muslim merchant, traveller and writer from **Iran**. He travelled to India and China and wrote an account of his voyages around 850 AD. He travelled to Guangzhou, Tang China, and marvelled at the excellent quality of **porcelain** there. He visited India during the reign of the great **Pala Empire**, which then ruled present-day West Bengal, Assam and Bangladesh. He called the Pala kingdom **Ruhmi**. He identified **Mihira Bhoja**, who was a bitter enemy of the Arab invaders, as one of the greatest Gurjar emperors.



Al-Masudi | Muruj-Ul-Zehab

He was a 10th-century Arab historian, geographer and explorer. He was a prolific author, and he wrote on various subjects such as theology, history, geography, natural science and philosophy. He was also known as the '**Herodotus of the Arabs**'.

He was born in Baghdad and descended from Abdullah **Ibn Mas'ud**, a companion of **Prophet Muhammad**.

He combined world history with scientific geography, social commentary and biography in his English publication '**The Meadows of Gold and Mines of Gems**'.

Al-Masudi wrote his famous manuscript titled **Muruj-ul-Zehab** in 956 AD.



Al-Biruni | Kitab-Ul-Hind



Al-Biruni was born in Khwarazm (present-day Uzbekistan) which was an important centre of learning then. He was a scholar who was well versed in Syriac, Arabic, Persian, Hebrew and Sanskrit. In 1017, Sultan Mahmud invaded Khwarazm and took many scholars and poets along with him to his capital, Ghazni. He was one among them. Here, he developed an interest in India. Also, owing to the inclusion of Punjab in the Ghaznavid Empire, he spent years in the company of Brahmana priests and scholars where **he learnt Sanskrit**. He **translated several Sanskrit works**, including Patanjali's work on grammar. Conversely, he translated Euclid's (Greek mathematician) works into Sanskrit. He travelled widely in Punjab and other Northern parts of India.

Al-Biruni's **Kitab-ul-Hind** is a voluminous text written in **simple Arabic**. It is divided into 80 chapters and **covers a wide range of subjects** such as religion, philosophy, festivals, astronomy,

alchemy, manners and customs, social life, weights and measures, iconography, laws and metrology. There was one distinctive structure that was followed in each chapter of the book – **beginning with a question**, following this up with a description based on Sanskritic traditions and **concluding with a comparison with other cultures**.

Al-Biruni faced three major barriers which were different from what he had seen earlier and obstructed his understanding. These were the following:

- ✿ Language
- ✿ Religious beliefs and practices
- ✿ Insularity of the local population

Al-Biruni viewed the prevalent caste system differently which was deeply influenced by his study of normative Sanskrit texts which laid down the rules governing the system from the point of view of the Brahmanas. He **tried to explain the caste system** by looking for parallels in other societies known to him.

Marco Polo | The Book of Sir Marco Polo

Marco Polo was an **Italian merchant**, adventurer and writer. He was born in the Republic of Venice in 1254 AD. His travels from one country to another are recorded in his book '**The Travels of Marco Polo**'. His book mentioned that China had a large area and great wealth. He wrote a detailed chronicle of his experiences in his book **The Book of Sir Marco Polo**. This book inspired **Christopher Columbus**.

Marco Polo's trip to India in 1271 AD earned him much fame in Europe in regard to his account of the commercial, religious and social conditions in the **Eastern world**.

Marco Polo visited the **Kakatiya kingdom** around 1289 CE during the reign of Queen **Rudramadevi**. It can be found from his works that a woman named Rudramadevi had inherited her father's throne and ruled the dynasty as a kind and benevolent ruler.

Other than these books, he wrote several manuscripts such as *The Customs of the Kingdoms of India*, *Florida Marco Polo* and *Travels in the Land of Serpents and Pearls*, among others.

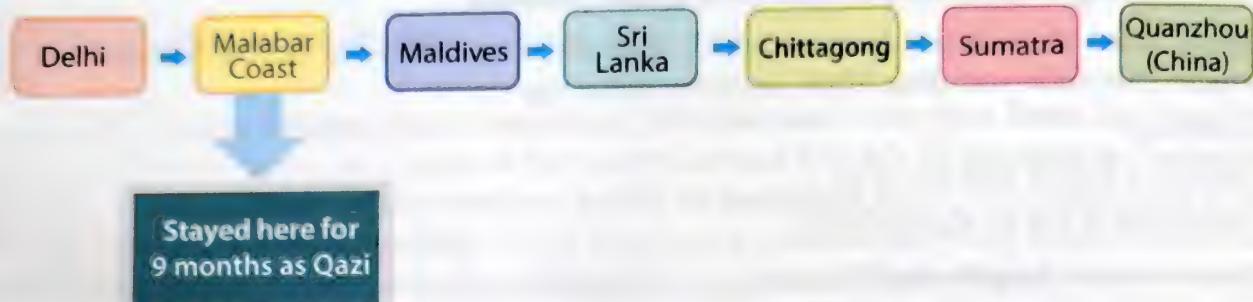


Ibn Battuta | Rihla

Ibn Battuta was a **Moroccan traveller** who was born in Tangier. He belonged to one of the respectable families known for their expertise in Islamic religious law or Sharia. Throughout his life, he travelled extensively in Syria, Iraq, Persia, Yemen, Oman and a few trading ports on the coast of East Africa. He came to India in **1332–33 AD** during the **reign of**



Muhammad bin Tughlaq who then appointed him as 'Qazi' or judge of Delhi. In 1342, he was sent to **China** as the Sultan's envoy. Before reaching China, he travelled extensively. The route he took is shown diagrammatically below:



The account of Ibn Battuta is often compared with that of **Marco Polo** who also visited both India and China.

Ibn Battuta wrote a book of travels in **Arabic** called **Rihla**. It provides vivid details about the **social and cultural life of India during the Delhi Sultanate period in the 14th century**. The book is highly meticulous where deep observations about new cultures, people, beliefs and, values are recorded.

Ibn Battuta was fascinated by **paan** (betel leaves) and **coconut** and wrote descriptively about them in his accounts. He even compared coconut with a person's head while writing about it.

He even wrote about **Indian cities**, which according to him were vibrant and densely populated. He particularly wrote about **Delhi** in detail.

He also mentions that the **postal system** was very efficient then which was not only used to send information and remit credit across long distances but was also used to dispatch goods. According to him, **Indian Post System** during medieval times was of **two types** – Horse Post called '**Uluq**' and Foot Post called '**Dawa**'. The Uluq used to be run by horses posted every 4 miles apart. And the Foot Post had three stations per mile, where one-third of a mile was known as Dawa.



Shihabuddin al-Umari | *Masalik albsar fi-mamalik al-amsar*

Shihabuddin al-Umari came as an ambassador from Damascus. He has given a vivid account of India in his book on Mamluk administration titled '**Masalik albsar fi-mamalik al-amsar**'.



Niccolò de' Conti

Niccolò de' Conti was an **Italian merchant** and explorer. He crossed the Arabian Sea to Cambay in Gujarat and entered India in **1420-21 AD**. He travelled to Pacamuria, Helly and the **Vijayanagara kingdom**. At that time, **Deva Raya I** ascended the throne of **Vijayanagara**.

In Mylapore (Chennai), he found the tomb of **St. Thomas** which ensured the presence of the **Christian community** in India. He confirmed the **gold and spice trade** amongst India, Sumatra and China.

He referred to the Telugu language as the '**Italian of the East**'. The first printed edition of De' Conti's manuscript came out in 1492 in original Latin by **Cristoforo da Bollate**. De' Conti described South-East Asia as '**overtaking all other regions in terms of wealth, culture and magnificence**'.



Abdur Razzaq | Matla-Us-Sadain-Wa-Majma-Ul-Bahrain

Abdur Razzaq was a **Persian, Timurid chronicler** and a scholar who visited the Vijayanagara kingdom at the time of **Deva Raya II**. He gave an account of the reign of **Deva Raya II**.

He came to the court of King Zamorin of Calicut as an ambassador of Shah Rukh (the Timurid dynasty ruler of Persia) in 1442.

He wrote a 45-page narrative of this mission to India. It appears as a chapter in his book **Matla-us-Sadain-wa-Majma-ul-Bahrain**.



Afanasy Nikitin | The Journey Beyond Three Seas

Afanasy Nikitin was a **Russian merchant** from Tver and one of the first Europeans (after Niccolò de' Conti) to visit India. He described his trip in a narrative named **The Journey Beyond Three Seas**.

During his visit, Nikitin studied the population of India, its social system, economy, military, religion, lifestyles, government and natural resources. The abundance of Nikitin's factual description provides a valuable source of information about India at that time.

He described the condition of the Bahmani kingdom under Muhammad III (1463–82).



Duarte Barbosa | Book of Duarte Barbosa

He was a Portuguese voyager who stayed in India for 16 years (1500–1516), most of the time in Kerala and in Vijayanagara kingdom. Barbosa studied Malayalam and has written about the caste culture that prevailed in India and also about the social life. He authored '**Book of Duarte Barbosa**', which is a detailed account of foreign cultures.



Domingo Paes | Chronica Dos Reis De Bisnaga

He was a **Portuguese** merchant, writer and explorer who visited India between **1520 and 1522 AD** and gave the most detailed account among all other historic descriptions of the ancient city

of Hampi under the reign of King **Krishnadevaraya (1509–29 AD)** of the Tuluva dynasty under the Vijayanagara Empire.

He recorded his journey in his book titled ***Chronica dos reis de Bisnaga*** where he provided in-depth information about the Vijayanagara Empire.

He reported the **following features** about that empire:

- Advanced **irrigation technology** that allowed peasants to produce high-yielding crops at very low prices.
- A wide variety of cultures as shown in the crops and vegetation.
- A busy **market for precious stones**.
- The prosperous city whose **size was comparable to that of Rome**, with abundant vegetation, aqueducts and artificial lakes.



Cesare Federici

He is also known as Ceasar Frederick. Federici was the most unfortunate of all the travellers who visited the Vijayanagara Empire. He visited it in the year 1567, 2 years after it was brought down to ruins after the battle of Talikota. He travelled in the East from 1563 to 1581 and left behind an account of social, economic and cultural life of people in India during that period.

In his own words, the ruins of Vijayanagara were described as:

"The Citie of BEZENEGER (Vijayanagara) is not altogether destroyed, yet the houses stand still, but emptie, and there is dwelling in them nothing, as is reported, but Tygres and other wild beasts."



Fernao Nuniz | *Chronica Dos Reis De Bisnaga*

Fernao Nuniz was a Portuguese merchant who came during the rule of Achyutdeva Raya of Tuluva dynasty of **Vijayanagara Empire**. He wrote the history of the empire from its earliest times of the closing years of Achyutdeva Raya's reign.

Fernao Nuniz visited Vijayanagara Empire in the time period of 1535–1537 AD. He noticed that there were women in the kingdom who were astrologers and soothsayers, who wrestled, and who would write the accounts of expenses. He co-authored ***Chronica dos reis de Bisnaga*** with Domingo Paes.



Jan Huyghen van Linschoten | *Itinerario*

He was a 16th century **Dutch** traveller who has given a valuable account of the social and economic life of South India (mainly Goa). In this book ***Itinerario***, he graphically displayed detailed maps of voyages to the East Indies, particularly India.



William Hawkins

He was a representative of the English East India Company and an ambassador of the **British King James I**. He came to India **in 1608** and travelled to Agra in the court of Mughal Emperor **Jahangir** to negotiate for the establishment of a factory at **Surat**. Favour by Jahangir enabled him to overcome all difficulties, and this permission was the first distinct recognition of English commerce in the East.



Antonio Monserrate | The Commentary of Father Monserrate: S. J., on His Journey to the Court of Akbar

He is also known as Antonio de Monserrate. Monserrate was a **Spanish** explorer who travelled to India in the 16th century. He is famous for his accounts and documents that depict local culture and customs of India.

Monserrate arrived in Goa, a Portuguese colony on the west coast of India, in 1578. He started his journeys within the Indian subcontinent, including significant travels to cities such as Agra, Fatehpur Sikri, and Lahore (in present-day Pakistan) with the primary objective of understanding the Mughal Empire and its ruler, Emperor Akbar the Great. He visited Akbar's court and gave descriptions of Akbar's administration, religious policies, and cultural practices in ***The Commentary of Father Monserrate: S. J., on his Journey to the Court of Akbar***, which provides valuable information of that period of Indian history.



Sir Thomas Roe

He was an English diplomat and a member of the **House of Commons** during the reign of **Queen Elizabeth I**. From **1615 to 1619**, he stayed at the court of the Mughal Emperor Jahangir. The main objective of his mission was to obtain **protection of the factory of the British East India Company at Surat**. The book ***The Embassy of Sir Thomas Roe to the Court of the Great Mogul, 1615-19, as narrated in his journal and correspondence*** is a valuable contribution to the history of India in the early 17th century.

His ***Journal of the Mission to the Mughal Empire*** is a treasured contribution to the history of India.



Peter Mundy

Peter Mundy was a 17th-century **British** merchant trader, traveller and writer. His journey extended to India, China and Japan. The fleet of four ships and two pinnaces was sent out by **Sir William Courten**, and Mundy seems to have been employed as a factor.

He arrived at Surat in 1628, and thereafter in 1630 he travelled to Agra and remained there until 1631, when he proceeded to Patna. Later, he returned to Agra and Surat, and lived there till around 1634.

He has described about the **Banjara community** in his writings. The Banjaras were important trader nomads during the Delhi Sultanate and Mughal times. Their caravan was called *tanda*.



Jean-Baptiste Tavernier

He was a 17th-century French **gem (especially diamond)** merchant and traveller. In his life, he made **six voyages** to Persia and India. During his second voyage between 1638 and 1643 AD, he came to India and travelled as far as Agra and from there to the Kingdom of Golconda. During his travel to Varanasi in 1665, he described that houses and other structures in Varanasi were mostly made of mud and clay while some made use of stones, slate and wood. He also visited the court of **Shah Jahan** and made his first trip to the diamond mines. In his book, he has extensively discussed about **diamond and the diamond mines** of India. He is popular for his discovery or purchase of the **Blue diamond** that he subsequently sold to Louis XIV of France.



Niccolao Manucci | Storia do Mogor

Niccolao Manucci was an **Italian** writer, doctor and traveller, who came to India in 1653 (at the age of 17) and **spent his whole life in India thereafter**. He never returned to Italy. He landed in Surat and was employed as an **artilleryman** in the army of the Mughal prince, Dara Shikoh. After Shikoh's defeat by Aurangzeb, he worked for the famous Rajput king, Mirza Raja Jai Singh, but this too did not last long. Manucci's travels and quests for employment took him all over India – from Kashmir to Bengal, Goa to Madras. **After he moved to South India**, he also earned the reputation of **Siddha practitioner**, a medicinal tradition native to South India. Moreover, he was fluent in several languages, particularly Persian.

In his book written in 1698, ***Storia do Mogor*** (or Story of the Mughal), he described the reign of Mughal emperors Shah Jahan (his later period) and mainly about life in the court of **Aurangzeb**. He also described about his life and casts himself as the long-suffering hero and Aurangzeb as the evil villain.



François Bernier | Travels in the Mughal Empire

François Bernier was a **Frenchman** who was a doctor, political philosopher and historian. He came to India in **1656** and stayed here **for 12 years in the Mughal Empire**. His writings were often a comparative account with the practices and developments in Europe. He constantly **compared Mughal India with contemporary Europe**, especially France, trying to portray the latter as superior. He mostly wrote about the prevalent **social and economic life**.



The main points are as follows:

- He severely **criticised the Mughal Empire**, calling the king the king of beggars and barbarians.
- There was a **lack of private property in the land** in Mughal India.
- He felt that artisans had no incentives to improve the quality of their products since the profit was appropriated by the state.
- He described Mughal cities as '**camp towns**' because towns owed their existence of the imperial camps.
- He also wrote in detail about workshops or imperial **karkhanas**.
- Merchants were organised in their caste-cum-occupational bodies such as **Mahajans, Sheths and Nagarsheths**.

Jean-Antoine Dubois | Hindu Manners, Customs and Ceremonies

Jean-Antoine Dubois was a French Catholic **missionary** who travelled to **South India**. He was called Doddha Swami by the local people. He came with an objective of converting Indian Hindus to Christianity. However, he failed. Instead, he is remembered for having adopted the way of life, clothing, food (vegetarianism) and language typical of a Hindu monk. His book **Hindu Manners, Customs and Ceremonies** contains three parts: a general view of society in India, especially of the caste system; the four states of Brahminical life; religious practices – festivals, feasts, temples, objects of worship. It is refreshing to find the quote '*A Hindu woman can go loungers. ... anywhere alone, even in the most crowded places, and she need never fear the impudent looks and jokes of idle. A house inhabited solely by women is a sanctuary which the most shameless libertine would not dream of violating*', in his book.

Important Foreign Travellers and their Books at a Glance

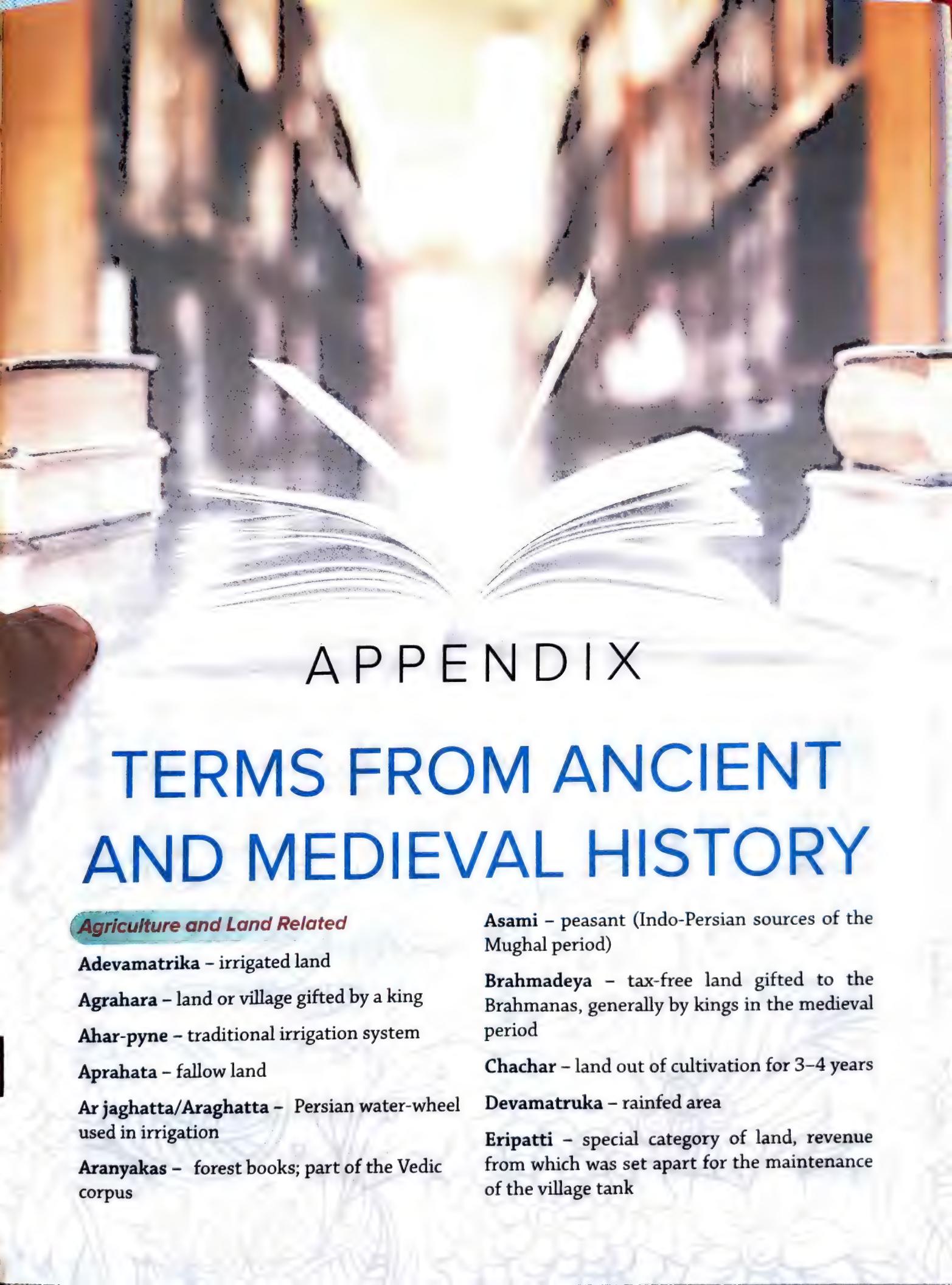
Traveller	Book Title	Description of Indian Dynasties	Ruling King
Megasthenes	Indica	Detailed account of Mauryan Empire, Chandragupta Maurya including governance and society	
Huien Tsang	1. Records of travel to middle India, 2. Si-yu-ki or 'The Records of the Western World'	Described India as a rich and prosperous country and gave account of the religious condition of India. He said Brahmanism, Buddhism and Jainism were all popular religions in India.	King Harshavardhana
Fa-Hien (Faxian)	Record of Buddhistic Kingdoms	Narrates Buddhist kingdoms and monasteries, provides cultural insights	Gupta Empire
Al-Biruni	Kitab al-Hind	Extensive study of Indian culture, society, and dynasties	Various dynasties, including Rajputs

Traveller	Book Title	Description of Indian Dynasties	Ruling King
Marco Polo	The Travels of Marco Polo	Chronicles his journey and encounters with Mongol rulers and Indian dynasties	Various dynasties, including Delhi Sultanate
Ibn Battuta	A Masterpiece to Those Who Contemplate the Wonders of Cities and the Marvels of Travelling – commonly known as Rihla	Describes the socio-political climate of the Delhi Sultanate and Vijayanagara Empire	Delhi Sultanate, Vijayanagara Empire
Jean-Baptiste Tavernier	Travels in India	Accounts of Mughal Empire, including interactions with Aurangzeb and Shah Jahan	Mughal Empire, Aurangzeb, Shah Jahan
Thomas Roe	The Embassy of Sir Thomas Roe to India	Chronicles diplomatic missions during the reign of Emperor Jahangir	Mughal Empire, Jahangir
Alexander Cunningham	The Ancient Geography of India	Provides insights into ancient Indian dynasties, including Mauryas and Guptas	Ancient Indian dynasties

CHAPTER SUMMARY

- **Megasthenes** – Greek historian – ambassador of Greek general Seleucus I Nicator – visited the Maurya capital Pataliputra during the reign of Chandragupta Maurya – authored *Indica*.
- **Deimachus** – came as an ambassador to Bindusara or Amitraghata – gave important information about society and polity – sent by Antiochus I (the son of Seleucus Nikator).
- **Fa-Hien** – Chinese pilgrim – visited India during the Gupta period around 400 AD – during the reign of Chandragupta II (Vikramaditya) – compiled a travelogue *Record of Buddhist Kingdoms*.
- **Shihabuddin al-Umari** – came as an ambassador from Damascus – wrote a book titled '***Masalik albsar fi-mamalik al-amsar***'.
- **Hiuen Tsang** – came to India through the Silk Route between 629 and 644 AD – during the reign of Harshavardhana – also known as Xuanzang and the Prince of Pilgrims – famous book *Si-Yu-Ki: Buddhist Record of the Western World* – spent 5 years at the University of Nalanda and studied under Acharya Shilabhadra.
- **Afanasy Nikitin** – described the condition of the Bahmani kingdom under Muhammad III (1463–82).
- **Yijing/l-tsing** – Chinese Buddhist monk who came to medieval India (671–695 AD) to study in Nalanda University – translated Buddhist texts from Pali and Sanskrit to Chinese.
- **Sulaiman al-Tajir** – 9th-century Persian Muslim merchant, traveller and writer – travelled to India and China – visited India during the reign of the great Pala Empire.
- **Al-Biruni** – born in Khwarazm (present-day Uzbekistan) – translated Patanjali's work on grammar into Arabic – authored *Kitab-ul-Hind*.
- **Marco Polo** – Italian merchant – visited the Kakatiya kingdom around 1289 CE – wrote *Travels in the Land of Serpents and Pearls*.
- **Ibn Battuta** – Moroccan traveller – came to India in 1332–33 AD – during the reign of Muhammad bin Tughlaq – appointed as 'Qazi' – wrote a book on travels in Arabic titled *Rihla*.

- **Niccolò de' Conti** – Italian merchant – travelled to the Vijayanagara kingdom – during the reign of Deva Raya I – referred to the Telugu language as the 'Italian of the East'.
- **Abdur Razzaq** – Persian – visited the Vijayanagara kingdom – during the reign of Deva Raya II.
- **William Hawkins** – representative of the English East India Company – ambassador of the British King James I – travelled to Agra in the court of Mughal Emperor Jahangir – negotiated for the establishment of a factory at Surat.



APPENDIX

TERMS FROM ANCIENT AND MEDIEVAL HISTORY

Agriculture and Land Related

Adevamatrika – irrigated land

Agrahara – land or village gifted by a king

Ahar-pyne – traditional irrigation system

Aprahata – fallow land

Ar jaghatta/Araghatta – Persian water-wheel used in irrigation

Aranyakas – forest books; part of the Vedic corpus

Asami – peasant (Indo-Persian sources of the Mughal period)

Brahmadeya – tax-free land gifted to the Brahmanas, generally by kings in the medieval period

Chachar – land out of cultivation for 3–4 years

Devamatraka – rainfed area

Eripatti – special category of land, revenue from which was set apart for the maintenance of the village tank

Gahapati – Pali term used during the Mauryan period for the head of wealthy land-owing family

Jalaprayah – water land

Kachchaha – land contiguous to water

Kani rights – rights over land in early medieval South India, sometimes also associated with certain duties and obligations

Kara-Shasanas – tax paying agraharas

Khudkashts – peasants with their own land (had occupancy rights)

Kināśa – term occurs in the Rig Veda to describe a ploughman or a cultivator

Kraya-shasana – a secular land-sale deed

Kunapa – liquid manure prepared by boiling flesh, fat and marrow of animals

Maru – desert area

Mirasidar – village elite with hereditary land rights (Mirasi) in South India

Mulgujar – owner of a tenure (primary zamindars)

Muzarian (Raiyat) – dependent on the khudkashts in the same village

Nadimatruga – land water from river

Nankar – revenue-free land

Pahikashts – cultivated the rented land by staying in the same village/neighbouring villages

Pankikala – muddy land

Parashara – scientific study of meteorology was made by ancient astronomers and astrologers

Polaj – land continuously in cultivation

Shadvala – grassy land

Sharkara – land full of pebbles

Sharkaravari – sandy area

Suthriyars – the farmers in the Vedic period who cultivated the land and produced agricultural products under the landlord

Taccavi loan – short-term loan given to farmers (Delhi Sultanate)

Taniyur – independent, special status given to Brahmadeyas (early medieval South India)

Taqavi – advance of money for sowing or extending cultivation

Upaksiti – tax on inferior land

Uparikara – additional tax paid by the temporary tenants

Ur – a non-Brahmadeya village of South India

Urvara – fertile land

Usar – barren land

Ushara – barren land

Velir – chieftains of South India

Vellala/vellalar – cultivating groups (south India)

Vellanvagai – non-brahmadeya villages of early medieval South India; same as *Ur*

Virda – a traditional water harvesting system in the region where the groundwater and soil are highly saline with salinity levels reaching as high as 98,000 ppm

Taxes Related

Bali – voluntary offering by the people, later became compulsory

Bhaga – king's customary share, one-sixth (Gupta period)

Bhatta – police tax (Gupta period)

Bhoga – periodic supplies of flowers and fruits, etc. (Gupta period)

Charah – tax on grasslands used for grazing of animals introduced by Allauddin Khilji

Charasana – grazing tax (Gupta Period)

Chat – security tax

Chaudhury – those who collected kharaj (land revenue) from peasants on behalf of the State. In lieu of it, they enjoyed certain privileges (*haqq-i-khoti*) such as exemption from paying kharaj

Chauth – $\frac{1}{4}$ th of the government revenue paid by Mughal officers collected by Shivaji

Ghari – tax on houses introduced by Allauddin Khilji

Halivakara – plough tax

Hiranya – tax payable in gold coins

Jizya – a tax levied on non-Muslims and non-followers of Islam (first introduced by Ahmad Shah)

Kara – periodic tax on the villagers

Kharaz – tax levied on the gross product of lands belonging to non-Muslims, introduced by Firoz Shah Tughlaq

Khiraj – land revenue

Khums – a tax which was $\frac{1}{5}$ th of the product (20%) if a person's earnings exceeded the expenditure needed for them and their family (by Firoz Shah Tughlaq)

Kalpita and Upkilpta – purchase and sells tax

Kosha – treasury

Rajju – tax for measurement of land

Sardeshmukhi – additional 10% tax paid by Mughal officers collected by Shivaji

Sarvarishti – forced tax

Sharab/Sharb – $\frac{1}{10}$ th of crop production levied on farmers to develop and maintain water supply facilities. It was introduced by Firoz Shah Tughlaq

Shulka – a toll tax, a customs duty particularly levied at ferries, passes, roads, etc.

Taradaya – tax on navigation

Udaka Bhaga – water tax (Mauryan Empire)

Udianga – police taxes/water taxes (Gupta period)

Uparnika – tax collected from the border area (Gupta period)

Ushraf – tax levied on the gross product of lands belonging to Muslims (by Alauddin Khilji)

Vetti – Tamil term which denoted a tax that was taken in the form of *forced labour*. This term has been frequently mentioned in Chola inscriptions

Zakat/Sadka – a religious tax levied on Muslims (by Firoz Shah Tughlaq)

Zarib – collected as one-quarter of the crop production. It was introduced by Murshid Quli Khan

Trade Related

Adesha – letters of credit or bills of exchange

Ainnurruvar – medieval merchant guilds of South India, they were the most elite among all merchant organisations during the Chola Empire

Askini – ancient name of the river Chenab

Aurang – warehouse for manufactured goods

Ayyavole – a powerful merchant guild of early medieval South India

Bania – merchant

Banian – engaged by an individual western merchant or a firm to work for them as a broker, interpreter and agent

Banjara – merchants who were engaged in nomadic trading

Baqqal – trader or grain dealer

Chettiar – merchants of South India

Hundikas – bills of exchange used by traders in early medieval times

Jokhmi – drawn against dispatched goods

Kraya-vikrayika – retailer (pre-Mauryan period)

Mandapika – customs house, local centre of exchange in a small town/trade centre in North India

Manigramam – medieval merchant guild in South India

Nanadesis – guild of traders

Nishka – gold weights used for transactions

Papanika – shopkeeper (pre-Mauryan period)

Pentha – centre of trade in ancient Deccan (600–1300 AD)

Purushni – ancient name of the river Ravi

Putabhedana – centre of trade in ancient India

Sadanira – ancient name of the river Gandak

Sahukar – moneylender (western India)

Sambhandariyaka – the place where items were stored or warehousing facilities were available in ancient Bengal.

Samuhahitavadins – advisors of the public good

Setthis – prominent traders and money lenders, mentioned in Buddhist Jataka tales

Shreni – association of traders

The Five Hundred Lords of Ayyavole – they were very powerful merchant guilds from

Aihole, who provided trade links between trading communities and dominated trade from the Red Sea to Java and Sumatra from the 9th to 13th centuries CE

Mauryan Period Related

Adhyakshas – officers who looked after the various departments

Agronomoi – the Mauryan district administration was under the supervision of this officer

Akshapataladhyaksha – Accountant-General

Amatyas – administrative personnel or civil servants who filled the highest administrative and judicial appointments

Anta Mahamattas – officers in charge of the bordering areas

Danda-Samata – introduced by Ashoka for equality of punishment

Gramika – head of the village

Ithihakha Mahamattas – officers charged with superintendence of women

Kupyadhyaksha – forest officer

Pativedaka – spies or reporters who had access to the king at any moment to give him information. The term is mentioned in one of Ashoka's inscriptions

Rajukas – officers vested with the authority of rewarding as well as punishing people

Samaharta – Chief Collector General of Revenue

Sannidhata – head of the Royal Treasury

Satrapal System – system of Government in North-western India (post-Mauryan period)

Sthanikas – revenue officers of the district

Stridhana – women's wealth; various types of moveable property given to a woman on various occasions during her lifetime, passed on from mother to daughter

Taniyur – a special status given to certain *brahmadeyas* in early medieval South India, making them independent of the *nadu* wherein they were located

Tirumurai – the canon of South Indian Shaiva bhakti

Tiruttondar-Tiruvantai – a work by Nambi Andar Nambi, which gives a short hagiography of the Nayanar saints

Tiruttondar-Tokai – a work by Sundarar, which lists 62 Nayanar saints

Vyavahara-Samata – introduced by Ashoka, it means all subjects equal in Law

Yuktas – subordinate officials whose duties were largely secretarial works and accounting

Satavahana Period Related

Gaulmika – administrator of villages

Uparakshita – their duty was to build caves for monks

Valaikkarars – troops in the royal service and were the bodyguard of the monarch

Gupta Period Related

Agharikas – looked after the land given in charity

Aprahata – forest land during the Gupta period

Bhuktis – The Gupta administration was divided into provinces called 'bhuktis'. The bhuktis were further sub-divided into 'Vishyas'.

Gopasramin – their duty was to enter numerous matters in the accounts register, recover royal dues and to check embezzlement and recover fines

Khila – waste land during the Gupta period

Kumaramatyas – top-ranking officials (*for posts such as mantris, senapatis, etc.*) and figuring prominently in seals and inscriptions of Gupta period. They were appointed on hereditary considerations. They resemble officers of modern IAS

Mahabaladhikrita – commander-in-chief

Mahapratihara – chief of palace guards

Mahattara – village headman

Nivi Dharma – a type of land tenure during the Gupta period, endowing land in perpetuity

Pustapala – officers who maintained the records of land transactions at the districts

Samantas – feudal chiefs

Sandhivigrahika – foreign minister and minister of war and peace. Mentioned in *Allahabad Prashasti*

Units of Land Measurements –

- Kulyavapa
- Dronavapa
- Adhavapa (Beangal)
- Nivartana
- Padavarta (western India)

Uparika – directly appointed by the king as a provincial governor

Maratha Administration Related

Ashtapradhan of Shivaji – council of eight ministers

Kathi – unit of measurement of land in the Maratha land revenue system

Mazumder/Amatya – accountant general

Nyayadhisth – chief justice

Panditrao – priest managing religious affairs

Peshwa – in charge of general administration and finance

Sar-i-Naubat – military commander

Sumant/Dabir – foreign minister

Shurunavis/Sacheev – looked after correspondence, prepared royal edicts

Upari – a category of tenancy tenure under the Maratha regime

Puram – one of two genres of classical Tamil poetry, the other genre – Akam

Thirumangai Alvar – the last of the 12 Alvar saints, holds the title Narkavi Perumal

Ur – one of the three types of village assemblies, found in Tamil inscriptions (the other two being *Sabha* and *Nagaram*). Ur was concerned with land management, irrigation, roads, charitable endowments, etc.

Uzhavar – ordinary ploughman or farmer in contrast to large landowners who were called vellal/vellalars

Val-mangalam – a ceremony in which the victorious king's sword was bathed and garlanded

Variyam – tax-yielding territorial unit

Vattakirutal – mentioned in Sangam poems, a ritual of a king defeated in a battle committing suicide by starving himself to death

Vellal/Vellalars – elite caste of large landowners

Sangam Period Related

Aimperunkulu – a council of priests, physicians, astrologers and ministers

Ainthinai – a concept of five eco-zones in Sangam literature

Akam – Sangam love poems

Arakkalam – the royal court of justice

Enperayam – an assembly of accountants, treasury officials, palace guards, leading men of the capital, chiefs of infantry, elephantry and cavalry

Kadaisiyar – slaves

Maryam – honours given by the king to officials and distinguished people

Muvendar – three big ruling chiefs, i.e., the Chera, Chola and Pandya kings

Periyapuram – is considered a fifth Veda in Tamil, the last book in the Saiva canon

Sultanate and Mughal Period Related

Aghacha – concubines who occupied the lowest position in the hierarchy of Mughal *harem*. They received cash and land grants for maintenance

Aghas – wives of Mughal emperors who did not come from a very noble family (unlike **begums** who came from royal families)

Altamgha Jagir – given to Muslim nobles

Amil Gulzar – in-charge of revenue collection at the *sarkar* level during Mughal period

Amin – surveyor for assessment of land revenue since the times of Shershah

Arazi – measured plot of land, particularly agricultural, for fixing land revenue

Arz-i-mamalik – minister in-charge of the army of the whole country

Banjar – land uncultivated for five years and more

Batai – method of land revenue collection **in kind** during Mughal period

Chachar – land that has lain fallow for three or four years (during Akbar's reign)

Chahar Taslim – mode of salutation introduced by Shah Jahan. It meant four times bowing down before the king

Chihil Sutun – a structure with forty pillars

Chirag-i-Shinasai – Persian phrase which means 'lamp of wisdom'. Abul Fazl used it to indicate the importance of written material which could remain for ages

Diwan-i-Ala – government department which maintains records of collection and disbursement of revenues

Diwan-i-Khalsa – subordinate officer to maintain records of crownland

Diwan-i-Tan – subordinate officer to maintain records of salaries

Duaspa Sihaspa – rank-troopers having two or three horses, introduced by Jahangir

Faujdar – officer who performed military, police and judicial functions during the Mughal period

Galla-Bakshi/Batai – system of revenue calculation and collection

Ilahigaj – unit of land measurement introduced by Todar Mal

Inam Jagir – had no obligations of service

Jagir – piece of land given as revenue assignment to a high-ranking Mansabdar in lieu of cash salary by Mughal rulers. Jagirdars did not necessarily stay in their jagirs. Jagirs were transferrable too

Jins-i-kamil – Persian word for cash crops during the Mughal period (cotton, sugarcane, etc.)

Khanajad – Muslim aristocrats (hereditary) in the Mughal Court

Khudkasht – peasants who owned and cultivated their land on a hereditary basis

Madad-i-Mash – revenue-free subsistence land granted to Muslim scholars and divines in the form of stipends under Delhi Sultanate. From the time of Akbar, it was also given to non-Muslims

Mahzarnama – issued by Akbar in 1579 AD to dominate Ulemas, it was written by Faizi.

Mandalika – feudal chief

Mansab – military rank conferred by the Mughal emperor

Mashrut Jagir – conditional

Milkiyat – personal land of zamindars

Mir Bakshi – head of the military administration (Mughal)

Munzaniq – catapult

Muqaddam – village headman, during the Delhi Sultanate period

Muraqqas – albums of Miniature paintings in the Mughal period

Mushrif – chief accountant

Mustawfi – auditor

Muqtis – commanders of military and administrative tracts (iqtas) during the Sultanate period

Naqib – an usher who would loudly announce the orders of the sultan to his soldiers. The chief of naqibs was known as *naqibu-al-nuquba*

Nastaliq – popular Persian style of calligraphic writing which evolved during the 15th–16th century. It was a favourite with Akbar. At his court, Muhammad Husain was honoured with the title '**Zarrin Kalam**' (*golden pen*) for being a pioneer of *nastaliq*

Parauti – land left out of cultivation for a time that it may recover its strength (term mainly used during Akbar's reign)

Pattakila – village headman

Peshkash – amount of money paid by an autonomous ruler to the Mughals

Polaj – land which is annually cultivated for each crop in succession and is never allowed to lie fallow (term mainly used during Akbar's reign)

Qanungo – semi-hereditary official who used to keep details of area cultivated, crops grown, crop yield, etc.

Qasid – foot runners who carried news reports and important official documents rolled up in bamboo containers across different regions during the Mughal rule in round-the-clock relays

Qazi – Muslim judges appointed by Muslim kings to dispense justice related to Islamic law

Risalas – military units of Hyder Ali (Mysore)

Sadar-i-Jahan – looked after the religious department

Sajjad Nashins – hereditary administrator/custodians of Sufi shrines

Sanad – imperial order

Sarvabhauma – emperor

Sawar – horseman enlisted for fighting

Sijda and Paibos – new customs introduced by Balban

Sirr-i-Akbar – translation of Upanishads by Dara Shikoh from Sanskrit into Persian in c. 1657

Suba – provinces into which Mughal Empire was divided. Subadar was the supreme officer of each Suba

Tainat-i Rakab – nobles who were usually stationed at the court to guard the emperor and his households during the Mughal period

Tankha Jagir – jagir given in lieu of pay (Rajput chiefs)

Tufangchis – matchlock men in medieval period

Tulughma and Araba – new strategies of warfare introduced by Babur.

Ulgulan – rebellion (Mundas)

Urf – local customs and practices that prevailed during the rule of the Delhi sultans and Mughals

Ushr – type of tax levied on land allotted to Muslims under the Delhi sultans and Mughals

Waqia-nayis – news writers who worked as news reporters during the Mughal period. They used to send their reports to Mir Bakshi

Watan Jagir – those jagirs wherein Mughal emperors allowed hereditary chiefs (Indian kings) to retain their autonomous rule

Zabt – system of land measurement

Zat – personal rank which mansabdars enjoyed during the Mughal rule

Zerat – land ownership system of European Indigo planters in Bengal and Bihar

Buddhism Related

Abhidhamma – pertaining to dhammas

Abhidhamma Pitaka – a psychologically oriented manual of ethics for advanced monks

Anatta – doctrine of non-self

Arhat – to be worthy or noble and is a title given to someone who has attained enlightenment as a result of listening to and practising the teachings of the Buddha

Ariya-sachchani – four Noble Truths in Buddhism – dukkha, samudya, nirodha, atthanga magga

Atthanga Magga – Eight Fold Path

Avalokitesvara – another name of Padmapani associated with Mahayana Buddhism

Bhikkhu, Bhikkhuni – male and female followers of Buddhism, who led their life begging for alms

Bodhisattva – a being who has dedicated himself or herself to attaining enlightenment

Brahmavihara – emotions that one 'lives in' and 'lives by' all the time like love, compassion, sympathetic joy and equanimity

Buddhaghosa – the Buddha's voice

Dhamma – refer to the whole corpus of the Buddha's teachings

Dhamma Mahamatta – new cadre of officials created by Ashoka to propagate dhamma. Rock Edict Five and Seventh Pillar Edict of Ashoka related the duties of Dhamma Mahamattas. They were empowered to release prisoners and remit their sentences

Digha Nikaya – collection of long discourses

Itivuttaka – a small book in the Khuddaka Nikaya

Jatakas – one of the 15 books of the Khuddaka Nikaya, containing stories of previous births of Buddha in animal and human form

Jāvaka Komārabhacca – the Buddha's personal physician and the father of Buddhist medicine

Jhana – stages the mind passes through as it progresses from cluttered normality to pristine clarity

Kālāma Sutta/Kesamutti Sutta – a discourse of the Buddha contained in the Ānguttara Nikaya. Often cited as charter of free inquiry

Kalyan Mitta – Buddhist concept of admirable friend whose company helps to attain eightfold path

Khuddaka Nikaya – fifth part of sutta pitaka

Mahavastu – discipline and usually used for a collection of rules for monks or nuns

Milindapanho – a Buddhist book which purports to be a dialogue between the Indian monk Nàgasena and the Indo-Greek king Milinda

Nettipakarana – a mythological Buddhist scripture, included in the Pali canon of Theravada Buddhism

Nibbana – a term used often in the Buddhist tradition for liberation from the cycle of birth and death

Paramitas – virtues of perfections which a Bodhisattva is supposed to attain

Parinibbana – the passing away of the Buddha

Patichcha-samuppada – (Pali word), the law of dependent origination; a part of the Buddhas teaching

Patimokkha – collection of aphorisms summarising the teachings but gradually this evolved into a code of behaviour, with 227 rules for monks and an extra 84 rules for nuns

Prajnaparamita – associated with Mahayana Buddhism, referred to as the perfection of wisdom. This concept is also cited as the perfected way of seeing the nature of reality, as well as to a particular body of sūtras and to the personification of the concept in the Bodhisattva

Sakyamunā – title given to Siddhattha Gotama after he became enlightened

Sangha – group or ‘congregation’ and is the name given to the body of the Buddha’s disciples

Saunas – room or house designed to induce sweating, for either hygienic or medical reasons

Saüsàra/samsara – perpetual wandering and refers to the continual process of rebirth

Sigàlovàda Sutta – discourse of Advice to Sigàla’ from the Dàgha Nikàya

Stupas – Buddhist monument

Sūtras – collection of aphorisms in the form of a manual or, more broadly, a condensed manual or text

Sutta Pitaka – the Pali collection of Buddhist writings of Theravada Buddhism

Svastika – a symbol in the form of a cross with its four ends bent at an angle of 90 degrees

Tathagat – one who attained the truth (Buddhism)

Tathagata – title of Buddha which means alternatively ‘Thus come’ or ‘Thus gone’

Theragatha/Therigatha – songs of Buddhist monks and nuns, found in the Suttapitaka

Theravada – the teachings of the elder monks

Upasaka – a male lay follower of the Buddha’s teaching

Upasika – a female lay follower of the Buddha’s teaching

Uposatha – the days of the full moon, half-moon and the two quarter moons of each month in the ancient Indian calendar

Vajrayana Buddhism – includes practices that make use of mantras, dharanis, mudras, mandalas and the visualisation of deities and Buddhas

Vassavasa – the monsoon retreat of Buddhist monks

Vihara – monasteries for the residence of Buddhist monks and nuns

Vinaya Pitaka – contains 227 rules for bhikkhus and 311 rules for bhikkhunis

Visuddhimagga – a treatise on Buddhist practice, written by Buddhaghosa

Jainism Related

Adharmastikaay – principle of rest that pervades the entire universe

Ahimsa – non-violence

Ajiva – non-living matter

Anugodara (Anuyogadvara) – individual texts of Shvetambara canon

Anuvrata – five fundamental vows of non-monastic Jains which include ahimsa, satya (truthfulness), asteya (non-stealing), brahmacharya (practice of celibacy) and aparigraha

Aparigraha – non-possessiveness

Asrava – refers to the influence of body and mind causing the soul to generate karma

Asteya – non-stealing

Atithi Samvibhaga Vrata – charity of own possession to monks, nuns and a pious person

Bandh – bondage by karma or darkness of the soul

Desavakasika Vrata – vow of limited duration of activities followed by non-monastic Jains

Dharmastikay – principles of motion that pervade the entire universe

Dik Vrata – vow of limited area of activity

Dvesha – means aversion; one of the three character afflictions that cause Dukkha

Gunavrata – three merit vows which include Dik Vrata, Bhoga-Upbhoga Vrata and Anartha-danda Vrata. These are intended to enhance the effect of the Anuvrata

Jina – name given to Mahavira which means conqueror

Kayotsarga – a yogic posture, part of Jain mediation

Kevala – state of elevated or blissful existence, similar to nirvana (Buddhism) and moksha (Hinduism)

Nirjara – destruction of karma

Pausadha Vrata – vow of limited ascetic life followed by non-monastic Jains

Samayik Vrata – vow of limited meditation followed by non-monastic Jains

Samyara – hindrance in the flow of karma

Shikshavrata – collection of four disciplinary vows followed by non-monastic Jains. This includes Samayik Vrata, Desavakasika Vrata, Pausadha Vrata and Atithi Samvibhaga Vrata

Triratna – literally, 'the three gems'; in Jainism, refers to the triple path of **right faith, knowledge and conduct**

Yatis – members of the Jain monastic order, monks or nuns

Islam and Sufism Related

Abraar – best of believers or virtuous

Ahl al-Fatrah – people who live in ignorance of the teachings of a revealed religion

Akhfa – the deepest part of the heart

Alam-i lahut – the realm of the essence of Allah

Alam-i wahdat – the realm of oneness

Auqaf – charitable trusts

Awliya – protecting friends of Allah; often cited as saints or guardians

Barakat – Sufi's spiritual grace

Dar al-Harb – refers to areas outside Muslim rule which a Muslim state can go to war with simply for not being Muslim

Degh – large cauldron (metal pot). Emperor Akbar gifted one such degh at Ajmer shrine for cooking meal for the pilgrims

Dhawq – perceptivity gained through divine grace

Farr-i-Izadi – developed by Sufi saint Shihabuddin Suhrawardi. According to Farr-i-Izadi, Mughal ruler received power from God

Furqan – criterion for right or wrong

Hadis, Hadith – sayings and deeds of Prophet Muhammad that were recorded by the followers after his death. After the Quran, it is the sole authoritative text

Iftar – first meal eaten by Muslims breaking their fast after sunset during the month of Ramadan

Istidraj – test of sincerity by forestalling the consequences of wrong action

Ittiqa – guarding oneself from evil or harm

Kashf al-Mahjub – one of the most ancient treatises on Sufism written by *Ali Hujwiri*. It contains a complete system of Sufism with its doctrines and practices. It was written to explain the meaning of *Tasawwuf*. Even today Hujwiri is revered as *Data Ganj Bakhsh* or 'Giver who bestows treasures'

Khalifa – successors of Prophet Muhammad

Maktubat – letter that was written by Sufi saint to his disciple as a reply to their spiritual and mundane difficulties. One such example is *Maktubat-i Imam Rabbani*, of the noted 17th-century Naqshbandi Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi

Malfuzat – conversations of Sufi saints that were compiled by Sufi orders. '*e Fawa'id-al-Fu'ad*' is one such collection of conversations of Shaikh Nizamuddin Auliya, compiled by Amir Hasan Sijzi Dehlavi

Meydan-ji – elder dervish who helps other students learn the proper customs and procedures in a meeting place

Mihrab – niche in a mosque which indicates the direction of prayers (*qibla*) towards the Kaba in Mecca. In India, it points towards the East

Minbar – steeped pulpit in a mosque from where the khatib recites the khutba

Mufti – experts on Islamic law who provided rulings when referred to by public or qazis

Mukhlas – sincere and dedicated one who chooses God as his/her goal

Murid – disciple of Sufi saint

Murshid – guide (also called shaikh or pir)

Qutb – a person of extremely high spiritual level who acts as administrator in the spiritual hierarchy of the world

Rijal al-ghaib – saint who can see remotely or travel through time and space in the service of Allah

Sufism – process of attaining closeness to the Creator through love

Tariqa – order of Sufism founded by a recognised member of a Silsila

Tasawwuf – original Arabic word for Sufism. It literally means 'purification of the self'

Tazkira – Persian term which stands for biographical accounts of saints under Sufism. *Siyar-ul-Auliya* (of Mir Khwurd Kirmani) was the first tazkira written in India in the 14th century

Ulatbansi – upside-down sayings. Commonly used by bhakti saints such as Kabir. Under Ulatbansi, the poems are written in a form in which everyday meanings are inverted. One such example is 'the lotus which blooms without flower'

Ulema/Ulama – Muslim scholars who specialised in Muslim law, theology and logic

Zakat – religious duty entrusted upon Muslims under which they had to give 40th part of their annual savings to the needy and travellers. Firoz Shah Tughlaq collected zakat as a regular tax

Zikr – refers to divine names under the Sufi tradition

Ziyarat – Pilgrimage to tombs of Sufi saints

Miscellaneous Terms

Abwab – all miscellaneous cesses and temporary or circumstantial taxes levied by the Government in Mughal India

Ahadis – special imperial troopers (gentlemen-troopers, Mughal)

Ahl-i-qalam – reporters

Aksapatalika – officer in charge of accounts and records

Al-Fatiha – first chapter of the Holy Quran

Amara-Nayakas – military commanders (Vijayanagara)

Āngarakṣa – the king's bodyguard

Antah-pratihāra – officer in charge defending the back gate of the palace

Antapāla – frontier guard

Anuloma – marriage between a man of higher varna and a woman of lower varna

Ānvikṣīkī – sanskrit term denoting “science of inquiry”

Aryavarta – abode of the Aryans

Audrangika – collector of the udranga tax meaning ‘tax on permanent tenants’ or the principal tax

Avani-vetana – police duties of a village

Ayagar System – socio-economic system originated in Karnataka

Baladhyakṣa – officer in charge of the army

Baluta System – socio-economic system that was prevalent in the Deccan

Barid – intelligence officer appointed by the state to collect information

Begar – forced labour

Bhagadugha – term used in the Rigveda which refers to a representative of the king who collects shares (*bhaga*)

Brhād-vājika – probably, a police officer

Cairn circle – an arrangement of prehistoric standing stone pieces circularly around the grave

Cartaz – naval trade pass issued by the Portuguese

Charana – school of Vedic study

Chaurasi – administrative unit of the Gond kingdom (presently Madhya Pradesh) comprising 84 villages. Chaurasi was the sub-divisional unit of *Garh*

Cora-rājāpathyakāri-varjam – with immunity from the police tax

Dagh System – system of branding of horses and other animals

Dakshinapatha – route leading to the South

Dam – copper coin considered as 1/40th of the silver rupee for official purposes

Damin-i-koh – forested areas of Rajmahal foothills given to the **Santhal tribes** to settle, by the English East India Company

Dasa – people different from Aryans as per the Rigveda

Dasarajna – the battle of ten kings in the 14th century BCE on the river Purushni (Ravi), referred in the 7th Mandala of Rigveda.

Dastur-al-amal – rule book

Dawa – foot-post was called ‘Dawa’ in medieval India (Ibn Battuta)

Deshmukh – revenue officer

Deshpande – accountant of revenue collection

Devadeya – land granted to temples

Drāṅgika – an officer in charge of a city-station or watch-tower to collect customs duties

Dvija – twice born (second birth when he wears a sacred thread)

Eripatti – a tank land (revenue from which was set apart for the maintenance of the village tank)

Ghatikas – important educational institution in South India

Grāma-talāra – a Faujdār

Grāmika – a village head-man

Grantidar – holder of direct land tenure

Gulmapati – officer in charge of a gulma (a group or outpost of guards)

Gumashta – an agent or representative

Harmika – a square railing on stupa

Hundi – bill of exchange in medieval India. Similar to *hundikas* mentioned above

Iramavataram – Ramayana in Tamil, written by Kamban

Jamabandi – settlement of the amount of revenue assessed upon an estate or district

Jarib – land measurement or survey

Kapardaka Purana – a medium of exchange in the Sena dynasty

Kamiya – bonded agricultural labourer (Eastern India)

Kankut – method of revenue calculation

Karori – revenue officer

Khatbandi – regulations that bound artisans to sell their products exclusively to the English East India Company

Kottam – settlement clusters in the Pallava kingdom, similar to Nadus

Kshatrapa – viceroy or subordinate ruler of the Scytho-Parthians

Kuṭumbin – a cultivator

Mahadandnayak – high-ranking judicial or military officer (*frequently mentioned in seals and inscriptions from 300 AD onwards*). Example – Harisena.

Mahal – group of land regarded as a unit for land revenue purposes

Mahapasayita – a Jāgīrdār of a particular type

Mahapilupati – superintendent of elephants

Mahāsādhanika – a commander of forces

Mahasthan Brahmi Inscription – this inscription (c. 3rd century BC) is the earliest epigraphic record in Bengal. It is a Brahmi inscription, found at Mahasthan in the Bogra district of Bangladesh

Malegitti Shivalaya – an example of early Dravida temple (c. 625–675 CE), early Chalukya architecture in Badami.

Malguzar – revenue farmer.

Malguzari system – land tenure in northern and central India, system of Revenue Settlement under the British

Manikkavacakar – 9th-century Tamil saint and poet

Mārgaṇaka – a levy

Mārgapati – guardian of the frontiers or passes

Mauza – revenue term for village

Medhi – circular pedestrian path in stupa (Buddhist architecture)

Menhir – standing stone

Mokasa – grant of rent-free land for military service

Munhiyans – secret spies appointed by Alauddin Khilji, provided daily reports of the market from barids

Nabud – remission of land revenue on account of natural disasters

Nadu – locality consisting of several settlements in early medieval South India

Nagarams – market or commercial centres in early medieval South India

Nagarattar – the corporate organisation of the nagaram

Nayaka – powerful military chiefs under the Vijayanagara kingdom

Nilamata Purana – an ancient text (6th–8th century CE) of Kashmir

Niyoga – levirate; the ancient custom of a widow cohabiting with her brother-in-law or another man in order to produce sons

Paibaqi – land reserved for allotment in jagir

Pargana – fiscal and administrative unit during medieval India. Each **Sarkar** was sub-divided into a number of Parganas, and each Pargana was further divided into towns or **Qasbas**

Pasubandha – cattle sacrifice in the Vedic period

Patwari – village accountant

Pramatara – an officer concerned with the administration of justice

Pratiloma – marriage between a man of lower varna and woman of higher varna. Not acceptable to Brahmins during that time

Rai Rayan – title given by the Sultanate of Delhi to an important tributary

Rajasuya – sacrifice performed by a kshatriya who wanted to be proclaimed as king. Described in later Vedic texts

'Rayagajakesari' and **'Dayagajakesari'** – titles associated with the Kakatiya dynasty

Samaranga Sutradhara – 11th century poetic treatise on Vastu Shastra or classical Indian architecture

Sant Bhasha – special language of the Nirguna mystics. It was extensively used by saints and poets to compose religious verses

Saptanga Rajya – literally ‘the seven-limbed state’, the *Arthashastra* concept of the state as consisting of seven elements. According to Kautilya, the seven elements of a state are – Swamin (the King), Amatya (Minister), Janapada (Land and the people), Durga (Fortress), Kosha (Treasury), Danda (Army) and Mitra (Allies)

Sarraf – supplier of credit through hundis

Sarrafs – bankers

Sarthavaha – leader of merchant caravan

Sarvavadinayaka – superintendent of the intelligence department

Sayurghal – rent-free land

Sipahsalar – commander-in-chief

Shreshthi – influential, wealthy, powerful people in society who had access even to kings. Finds mention in later Vedic texts

Sundarar/Tampiran Tolan – 8th century poet of Tamil Shaiva Siddhanta tradition (Nayanar)

Talaiyari – a watchman

Terra sigillata – bright-red, polished pottery, ware, it was used throughout the Roman Empire

Tevaram – first seven volumes of the Tirumurai

Theris – respected women

Thirukkovaiyar – a Shaivite treatise composed by Manikkavacakar (9th century)

Tirukkaiiaya Nana Ula – composed by Cheraman Perumal, it is the oldest Ula. The first Ula – the Atiyula was composed in the 9th century AD.

Tiruppan Alvar – the eleventh in the line of the twelve Alvars in South India

Ula – literary work in Tamil, it describes procession of different temples.

'Ulug' – the horse-post was called 'Ulug' in medieval India (Ibn Battuta)

Vailabdhika – custodian of recovered stolen property

Vajapeya – sacrifice (yajna) performed by king wishing to attain supremacy over other kings

Varnasamkara – inter-mixing of varnas (classes of society) through marriage

Vendar – the three 'crowned kings' of early historical South India, i.e., the Cholas, Cheras and Pandyas

Vidata – assembly in the Vedic society

Viragal – the word for a 'hero stone' in the Tamil Nadu area

Vishti – the term refers to unpaid or free labour. The ancient text *Manusmriti* indicates that the shudras were to work for the king for a day in each month in lieu of taxes which they cannot pay

Yajamana – the person for whom the yajna (sacrifice) is performed and who bears its expenses

Yakshas – deities associated with water, fertility, trees, forests and the wilderness

Yakshis – female deities associated with fertility, consorts of yakshas

Yaudheya – a republic tribe which emerged during the 5th century BC. They were an ancient militant confederation renowned for their skills in warfare. They regained autonomy and ruled as contemporaries to the Shunga Empire and Indo-Greek Kingdoms, and minted their own coinage. However, they were conquered by the Kshatrapas led by Rudradaman.

Yavana – Greeks, foreigners from the West

Yogakshema – work for the overall well-being

Zawabit – secular laws

Zimmi, Dhimmi – Arabic term which means protected people (*mainly non-Muslims who by paying jizya got protection*)



1. Ajanta Caves
Maharashtra (near Aurangabad)

1983



2. Ellora Caves
Maharashtra (near Aurangabad)

1983

The fresco paintings and sculptures in **29 rock-cut caves** of Ajanta are the illustration of **Buddhist religion**. *(details given on page - 16)*

34 monasteries and temples of Ellora caves complex relate to **Buddhism, Hinduism and Jainism** which were built between **600 to 1000 AD**. Prominent one is **Kailasha Temple** at Cave 16 built by the Rastrakuta Dynasty. *(details given on page - 17)*



6. Group of Monuments at Mahabalipuram
Mahabalipuram, Tamil Nadu

1984

40 Monuments were built by **Pallava kings** in **7th and 8th century AD**. The monuments built by them are **Ratha Temples, Mandapas, 11 Cave Sanctuaries** covered with bas-reliefs, rock relief of **Descent of the Ganges** (also known as **Arjuna's Penance** or **Bhagiratha's Penance**). *(details given on page - 27)*



7. Churches and Convents of Goa
Velha Goa (Old Goa)

1986

These were built by the Portuguese colonial rulers of Goa between the 16th and 18th century. Famous among them is the **Basilica of Bom Jesus**, which is the tomb of Saint Francis Xavier. Others include - Church of Our Lady of the Rosary, **Se Cathedral**, Church of St. Francis of Assisi, etc.



	3. Agra Fort Agra, Uttar Pradesh	1983	4. Taj Mahal Agra, Uttar Pradesh	1983	5. Sun Temple, Konark Puri District, Odisha	1984
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ex ch is ita	Initiated by Akbar and several additions were done in the later Mughal period, most of the structure within Agra Fort premises were built using red sandstone . (details given on page - 52)	It is one of the seven wonders of the world. It represents a mausoleum of his wife built by Shahjahan in 17th century . (details given on page - 54)	This 13th Century Sun Temple is also known as Black Pagoda . It was built by King Narasimhadeva I of the Eastern Ganga Dynasty and was constructed using oxidizing weathered ferruginous-coloured sandstone .
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1986	8. Khajuraho Group of Monuments Madhya Pradesh	1986	9. Group of Monuments at Hampi Vijayanagara district, Karnataka	1986	10. Fatehpur Sikri Uttar Pradesh	1986
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of Goa them of Saint ady of Assisi,	These monuments are attributed to Chandela Dynasty . A number of Hindu and Jain temples there form part of this group. The most famous being Kandariya Mahadev temple , Vishvanath temple, etc. (details given on page - 24)	Located on the bank of the River Tungabhadra , Hampi was the capital of Vijayanagara empire . Famous monuments include – Vitupaksha Temple , Stone Chariot & Kalyana mandapa inside Vittala temple complex, sculpture of Lakshmi Narasimha, Hazara Rama temple, etc. (details given on page - 30)	This “City of Victory” was built in 16th century by Akbar . Buland Darwaza , Panch Mahal, Ibadat khana , Diwan-i-iam, Diwan-i-khas, tomb of Salim Chishti , etc are some prominent structures there. (details given on page - 53)
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11. Group of Monuments at Pattadakal

Bagalkot District, Karnataka

1987

7th and 8th century AD Hindu and Jain temples can be found here. Hindu temples are generally dedicated to Lord Shiva. Pattadakal monuments have architectural features of **Nagara** as well as **Dravida** style. The most outstanding architectural edifice is **Virupaksha Temple** built by **Chalukya Dynasty** to commemorate the victory of king **Vikramaditya II**. Other prominent monuments here include Papanatha temple, Jain Narayan temple, etc.

12. Elephanta Caves

Maharashtra (Near Mumbai)

1987

The caves are made of **solid basalt rock** and were excavated between **6th and 8th century AD**. The caves contain the rock cut sculptures of mainly **Lord Shiva**. Famous sculpture here is **Trimurti**.



16. Qutb Minar and its Monuments

Delhi

1993

Qutb Minar is a red sandstone tower of 72.5 metres. The minar complex consists of **Alai Darwaza**, **Alai Minar**, **Quwwat-ul-Islam Mosque**, **tomb of Iltutmish** and an **Iron Pillar** (7.02 metres).

Darjeeling Himalayan Railway

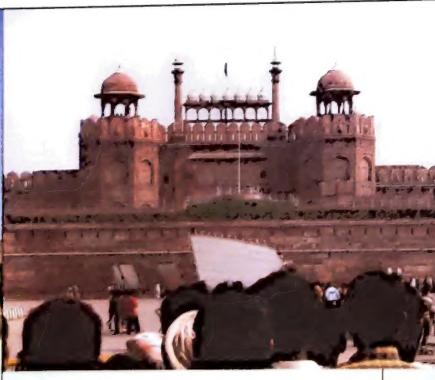
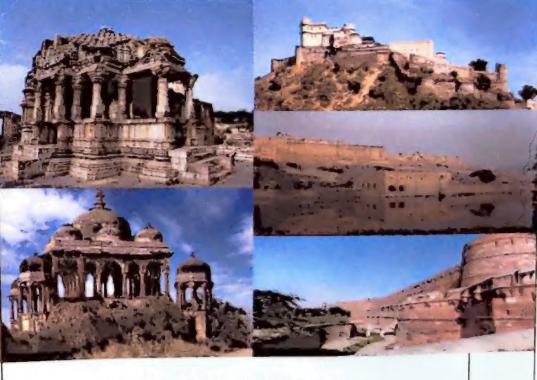
Darjeeling, West Bengal

1999

Nilgiri Mountain Railways

Ooty, Tamil Nadu

Mountain railways of India are the outstanding example of an effective rail link through rugged mountainous terrain. construction technology of the time.

<p>13. Great Living Chola Temples, Tamil Nadu</p> <p>1987</p> <p>This group of temples contain Brihadisvara temple (by Rajaraja-I) at Thanjavur, Airavatesvara temple (built by king Rajaraja II) at Darasuram, and Gangaikonda Cholapuram temple (built by Rajendra I).</p>	<p>14. Buddhist Monuments at Sanchi Sanchi, Madhya Pradesh</p> <p>1989</p> <p>Being the oldest Buddhist sanctuary in existence, these were developed mainly during Mauryan period by Ashoka. These consist of plethora of monolithic pillars, temples and Buddhist Stupas. Famous one being Sanchi Stupa.</p>	<p>15. Humayun's Tomb Delhi</p> <p>1993</p> <p>It is the precursor to Taj Mahal and was built in 1569-1570 by Humayun's widow Haji Begum. Its architectural style is known as the 'Necropolis of the Mughal Dynasty' for its double domed elevation.</p>
 <p>Railways of India</p>	 <p>18. Mahabodhi Temple Complex Bodh Gaya, Bihar</p> <p>2002</p>	 <p>19. Rock Shelters of Bhimbetka Madhya Pradesh</p> <p>2003</p>
<p>Railway du</p> <p>2005</p> <p>Kalka-Shimla Railway Himachal Pradesh</p> <p>2008</p> <p>bold and ingenious engineering solutions for establishing Construction of mountain railways represented the latest</p>	<p>It is the site where Lord Buddha attained Nirvana (enlightenment). Mahabodhi temple was built by Emperor Ashoka in 3rd century BC around the Bodhi Tree.</p>	<p>It consists of magnificent repository of rock paintings of Mesolithic period within natural rock shelters. (<i>details given on page - 146</i>)</p>
 <p>2004</p>	 <p>22. Red Fort Complex (Lal Qila) Delhi</p> <p>2007</p>	 <p>23. Jantar Mantar Jaipur, Rajasthan</p> <p>2010</p>
<p>om pre- nged pre- and Jain attracts a</p> <p>This palace fort was built by Shahjahan in 17th century. Architectural designs represent Persian, Timurid influence. This fort complex includes Salimgarh fort, Nahr-i-Bihisht, Diwan-i-khas and Moti Masjid.</p>	<p>It has a great collection of architectural astronomical instruments and was built by Raja Sawai Jai Singh II.</p>	<p>24. Hill Forts of Rajasthan Rajasthan</p> <p>2013</p> <p>Rajput princely States flourished from 8th to 18th centuries AD. The six majestic hill forts are Chittorgarh fort, Kumbhalgarh fort, Ranthambore fort (in Sawai Madhopur), Gagron fort (in Jhalawar), Amber Fort (in Jaipur) and Jaisalmer fort.</p>



25. Rani ki Vav (The Queen's Stepwell)
Patan, Gujarat

2014

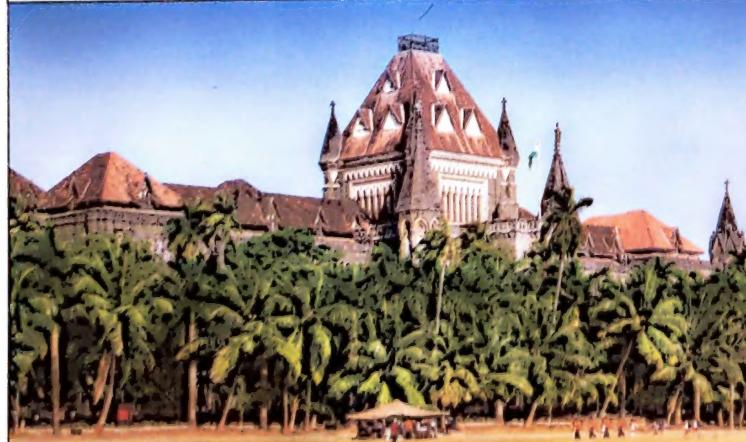


26. Archaeological site of Nalanda Mahavihara
Nalanda, Bihar

2016

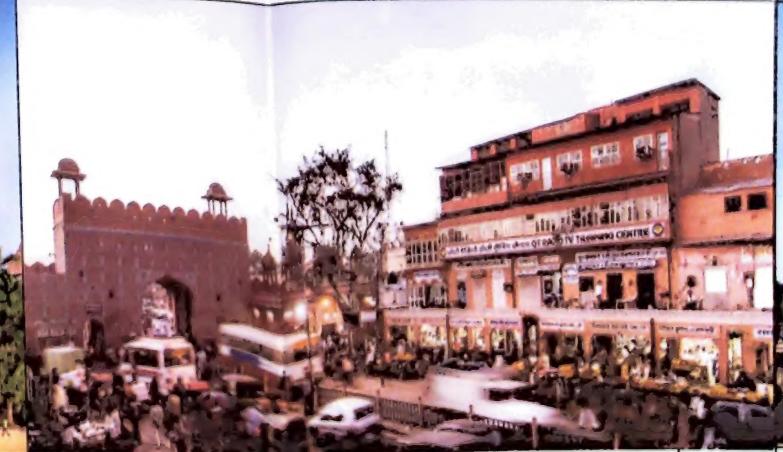
There are more than 500 sculptures of Lord Vishnu in the forms of Dashavatara – **Kalki, Rama, Mahisasuramardini, Narsingha, Vaman, Varaha** etc. 16 different styles of makeup of beautiful women here is called **Solah Shringar**.

It is one of the most **ancient University** of India. It includes **stupas, shrines, viharas** and important art works in **stucco**, stone and metal.



29. Victorian Gothic and Art Deco Ensembles of Mumbai
Maharashtra

2018



30. Jaipur City
Rajasthan

2019

It is an ambitious urban planning project which led to construction of an ensemble of public buildings. The buildings are **Bombay High Court, Rajabai Clock Tower, Eros Cinema, University of Mumbai**, etc.

It was founded in 1727 by Raja Sawai Jai Singh II and was later developed through a **proper urban planning** and **well-structured grid plan**. It is also known as the **Pink City**.



27. The Architectural work of Le Corbusier
Chandigarh

2016

It is a home to numerous architectural projects of **Le Corbusier**, Pierre Jeanneret, Matthew Nowicki and Albert Mayer.



28. Historic City of Ahmedabad
Ahmedabad, Gujarat

2017

Sultan Ahmad Shah in **15th century** founded the city on the eastern bank of River **Sabarmati**. The famous architecture of this city is **Bhadra citadel**.



31. Kakatiya Ramappa Temple
Mulugu district, Telangana

2021

It was constructed in 13th century by **Kakatiya Dynasty** and is also known as the **Rudreshwara** (Lord Shiva) temple. It was built using sand-box technique. Foreign traveler **Marco Polo** visited this temple.



32. Dholavira: A Harappan City
Gujarat

2021

One of the best preserved urban settlements of Indus Valley Civilisation (IVC). Prominent findings include sophisticated **water management system**, a large cemetery, bead processing workshop, etc. It is the **first site under IVC in India** to be declared as World Heritage Site by UNESCO.